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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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ERNEST PUBLISHER (LOQ.) "THERE'S NOTHING LIKE TWO STRINGS TO ONE'S BOW. WHERE GOD DON'T PAY THE DEVIL WILL."
From a cartoon by F. BEARD in the Ford collection of the New York Public Library.

A Disappearing Art

TIME was when the essay was one of the most honored devices of literature. Only so lately as the 'nineties of the last century it was still flourishing, finding its way with little difficulty into the magazine and emerging through it eventually in book form. But the temper of our day seems to be against it. We have substituted for it the informative or controversial article, the discussion of some problem of immediate import, the analysis of a trend, or the exposition of a point of view. That pleasant dalliance with things of small significance, the whimsical trifling with the routine of daily living, and the nimble tossing about of ideas and impressions that lent the essay its appeal seem to be out of tune with the time. We demand sterner stuff, or, for our hours of leisure, more exciting literature than the essay affords.

For it is of the very essence of the essay that it be gentle, discursive, non-propagandist. Conceived in tranquillity, it grows of contemplation, and matures by mellowness of spirit. Nothing is too trivial to be transmuted by it into significance, nothing too immense for it to catch and transform into a personal matter. Few literary forms bring the author and his reader into so direct communion or establish so intimate a relationship between them. Few partake so largely of the informality of conversational intercourse, with its wanderings into the by-lanes opening up from the main path of interest and its excursions into the unexpected and the remembered.

The mood and tempo of present-day civilization are, we fear, little likely to restore the essayist to his lost popularity. We live too fast, think too little, are too impatient of the speculative, and too avid of accomplishment to tolerate the ruminative discursiveness of the easy chair philosopher. The war startled us out of the pleasant places of thought into a horrified awareness of the maladjustments of political society, and the peace thrust us into an era of rebellion against the smugness which had accepted a pre-war world as one to rejoice in. Suddenly the essayists vanished; they were no longer amiable fellows with a charitable, if sometimes amused, outlook on life, but crusaders with missions to fulfil or fallacies to expose. They fulminated instead of wooed the fancy, expounded instead of diverted, lived in the moment instead of in time.

It is a pity, indeed, that they should have so disappeared and that publishers, or at least most of them, should shy away from the attempt to restore them. At best, the essay that interests the publisher today is the essay in criticism which, if broadly handled, allows, of course, some leeway for general discussion. But it is necessarily focussed about a book, or an idea or group of ideas, and permits of little latitude for that browsing among fancies and feelings which in the past has so often lent amenity to literature. We need the mildness of mood of the essayist sadly, and his perspective on life and living. For part of what ails society today is that it lives so fiercely in the instant, is so extravagantly buoyed up by confidence when things go well, so despairingly cast down by fears when they go ill. A little admixture of the essayist's habit of mind would help us all, a little of that detachment which holds itself remote enough from the turmoil of the moment to see its world, sunflecked now, now in shadow, a thing of infinite possibilities, a little of that mellowness of feeling which loves even when it jests at humanity, a little of that agility of fancy which uses a commonplace as a springboard to adventures of the spirit. "Philosophy is a good horse in the stable," and essayists are philosophers of a most approachable kind.

Requiem

By CHARLOTTE WILDER

HE does not love: a riven ground
Measures the stature of his heart;
Nor need he longer groan, for sound
To split a fire from its smart;

Webbed with frost, his thoughts but know
The forced cessation of the slain
Who, centuries past, in overthrow,
Relinquished empires of the brain.

Again, I mark the bloom of snows
That deaden pity on her grave,
Over that wintry inlet blows
The music of a foregone stave

I alone heard. One night, from sleep
Too well beleagured for a kiss
She woke in tears; if now I weep
It is for nothing less than this.

You Publishers

By AMOS WHITE

(The signature of this article is admittedly a pen-name. Its author has long had some very pleasant intimate relationships with publishers, including two of the three whose imprints appear on books of his. He has also had a number of disagreements, and even a wrangle or two, with publishers. Neither the one fact nor the other has any bearing on the present point—a generalized point directed at the entire industry without invidious distinctions. It is manifestly impossible for an author of books, using his own name, to say his say about publishing without the appearance of singling out his own publishers for special reprobation or what-not, thus introducing personalities into a discussion of impersonal tendency and inviting quarrels unconnected with his purpose. Yet it is for the public good that these things be said, and the chance is slight that they will ever be said unless by a writer of books. The obvious way out of the impasse is by a decent anonymity with complete but impersonal candor—the way here taken.)*

FOR quite a number of years the writer of these paragraphs has worked for you and with you, gentlemen and ladies of the profession of publishing, and he feels that in the course of those years he has come to know you rather well. With many of you he has close and cordial friendships, and there is none of you whose work he has not faithfully watched. He appreciates your very real difficulties and has no disposition to minimize them. He gives you credit for what you have accomplished — often against odds, by the exertion of real courage and imagination—and he believes that he has never underestimated your sagacity or the essential rightness of your purposes. Indeed, on more than one occasion he has served as your voluntary apologist, both orally to authors who thought themselves aggrieved by your treatment and in print to extensive audiences whose predisposition was to believe the worst of you without proof. Moreover, he has no axes to grind and nothing to sell you. And if he has a complaint to state, it is not his complaint as a mere individual or as an author. Rather, it is the complaint of the great public which you exist supposedly to serve and by which you live—that miscellaneous public whose self-elected (but truthful and representative) spokesman this writer is now trying to be.

The complaint in its essence is one which I have stated to a number of you individually with all the cogency I could muster. A curious aspect of the situation is that individually you have agreed with me—"in theory," as you always put it—and that your agreement has nevertheless been only the prelude to more and more of the precise behavior that justified the complaint. Specifically, you will always admit in your more expansive moods that you publish a great many books not worth their paper; that you do this in the hope of making money out of them, whereby you may be able to give some better books a chance; and that more often than not you either lose money by doing it or else make so little as hardly to justify the trouble. Most of you will admit in addition that, for fear of loss, you decline to publish a good many manuscripts which intrinsically deserve publication and which you would be proud to sponsor. Few of you deny that it would be difficult or impossible to get publication today for "The Return of the Native," "The Ordeal of Richard Feverel," "Moby Dick," or "Nostromo," if one of them were to be sent to your offices as the work of an unknown author. All of you had rather publish good books than poor or indifferent ones, and all of you believe that the recent lapse from reasonably exacting standards is an atrocious thing for civilization and a bad enough thing for business. And yet all of you collectively go on doing nothing about it. How can this be?

What I want now to challenge is the whole system and conception of publishing trash in order to be able to afford an occasional fine thing out of the proceeds. It is a policy which has always worked as badly as any other species of doing ill that good may come of it, and it is working worse than ever in this day of general depression. To begin with, nine out of ten of the inferior things accepted to make money quite fail to make it; and the hypothetical good book which was to have profited by the gain is left higher and drier than ever by the very means you resort to to float it. To go on with, the good book is frightened out of existence by the preponderance of bad ones, so that you perhaps never even get a chance to consider it. You know yourselves that money in the publishing business is almost invariably made unexpectedly and *out of the best items on your lists*. The last thing that commonly makes money is the thing you have accepted for no reason beyond the possible profit. If any truism stands proved by the history of publishing, it is that the publication of good books has to be financed out of the successes of other good books; because, speaking by and large, the bad ones do not succeed. The good book is therefore the better risk every time, just as a sheer commercial gamble. And yet all of us go through a pantomime of astonishment every time an unusually fine novel sells a hundred thousand copies. What is the sense of that?

He who knows nothing about your qualities as persons (and who could know much about them by what you elect to

* In connection with this article see the letter appearing on page 10.

This Week

"HUGH THOMSON."
Reviewed by WILLIAM M. IVINS, JR.

"HINDOO HOLIDAY."
Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

"JOHN WESLEY."
Reviewed by ROLLIN LYNDE HARTT.

SATAN INVENTS "ART."
By LINCOLN STEFFENS.

"THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM IN AMERICA."
Reviewed by WALTER MILLIS.

"THE MAKING OF CITIZENS."
Reviewed by CLINTON ROGERS WOODRUFF.

HUMAN BEING.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

"THE ENGLISH POETIC MIND."
Reviewed by GEORGE MCLEAN HARPER.

Next Week, or Later

"THE SHELTERED LIFE."
Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY.

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publish?) might seek the answer in plain lack of taste. But such a person would be wrong. Taste most of you do possess; and of those who do not, most will listen respectfully to those who are supposed to possess it. The explanation of the formidable contrast between what you would prefer to do and what you actually do lies in the one word Fear. You have let yourselves be stampeded by conditions; and all of you are huddling together in a scared instinct to be in the same place and do the same things. You have plenty of convictions, now as ever; but you have let yourselves be terrified out of the courage of your convictions.

A LITHOGRAPH BY GAVARNI.
Reproduced from *"The Year at Goodspeeds."*

Perhaps there are too many of you in business—not too many for the authors extant or for the amount of public support that has to be divided up among you, but too many simply for your own morale. Publishing used to be a highly individualized occupation, and the distinctions of any house were deemed to

psychology which looks after the production of hysterical conduct. The publishing profession has come to be so numerous that it forms within itself a body of public opinion, of which the publisher is often more acutely conscious than he is of the actual public. You publishers are today watching one another as hawkishly as if none of you had ever heard of any market for his books except all the other publishers. Each is morbidly afraid some other will steal a march on him; and you guard against this imagined calamity by copying one another's least motions.

It boils down, necessarily, to this: that you faithfully imitate all of each other's defects and timidities—each other's powers and inspirations being essentially inimitable. Of course, you would vastly prefer successes to failures; but of two possible failures you will choose every time the one which all your fellows are most exactly duplicating. Every one of you takes inordinate pains to load down his list with the same sorts of bad books that the others are going in for at the moment, as if an intrinsically poor thing gained merit by repetition, or a consensus of worthlessness constituted value. You have reached the stage where it is morally easier for you to fail in good company than to strike out boldly in some new direction toward a conceivable success. The result is publishing deprived of the indispensable element of originality, experiment, adventure. And that is a result of being scared.

If you could for a moment see yourselves as disinterested outsiders see you—nearly an impossibility so long as your horizon is bounded by your competitors' usages and the present state of the book trade—you would, I think, find some wry amusement in your own growing resemblance to the one class of impresarios which you have always derided as a synonym of all that is ignorant, wasteful, un-American, and footling: I mean the motion-picture producers. The chief trouble with these gentlemen, as all of us are aware, is that they know nothing about America and can be taught nothing. They imagine they have a representative cross-section of public opinion in the communications of persons so witless as to be reduced to the composition of "fan letters" for a pastime. They spy excitedly on each other and never let a successful film appear without a flock of prompt imitations containing everything of the original except the element that made it successful. They construe the failure of every bad picture as a proof that it was not quite bad enough, and forthwith plan how to make a worse one, and make it.

Seriously, have not you publishers been growing progressively more like that for a number of years past? You too are taking your idea of the public from exceptional, non-representative, fantastic parts of it—e.g., book reviewers, who, being paid to read your output and pay attention to it, lack the one essential point in common with the audience for which books are written and by which they are bought. You too are in the business of imitating each other's attempts. Worst of all, you, like the picture producers, are losing the public by aiming at the lowest extensions of its interest and its taste. And this is perhaps the most deplorable consequence of the fear that dictates your procedures today—this loss of your confidence in the existence of an immense public which wants the best you can contrive to give it. It does exist—a huge and profitable public—but your disbelief has been driving it into the library and away from the bookshop. That public will not stoop below a certain level of solidity, thoughtfulness, and seeming permanence in its reading matter; and when you put your standard below its minimum of tolerance you simply teach it to forget and ignore current writing as a source of personal profit, to its detriment and your own destruction. You are throwing away this one great natural book audience in a competition for the vastly greater mass of addicts of the screen, the radio, the pulpwood magazines, the tabloids—a mass which you can never reach with books.

audience whatever exists.

There was a recent year, you recall, when the picture magnates thought they had discovered that no film could succeed with the public unless it had a title suggestive of scandal or loose living. The search for spicy titles was ingenious and unflagging; such titles were even pinned on many a film which in actual content did nothing to justify them. At the end of that year, its picture output was listed in the order of box-office returns, from the highest to the lowest. The noteworthy fact about the list was that the top of it consisted exclusively of such titles as "All Quiet on the Western Front," "Holiday," "Cimarron"—titles giving the absolute lie to the producers' fancied discovery about their public. You had to go deep into the second dozen items on that list to encounter even one of the titles which had been laboriously invented to hint indelicacy without actually flouting censorship.

You look on these magnates with some contempt. But what about yourselves and your books?

You witnessed a triumph not so long ago in Miss Cather's "Shadows on the Rock," a quasi-historical idyll in which there was not a touch of the topical, the journalistic, the highly condimented, not a line at any lower elevation than serene nobility. You witnessed another such triumph in Mrs. Buck's "Good Earth." But has the success of such books told you anything about the book-buying and—reading public of this country—about what Americans of the literate class really are and really want from you? We shall believe that you have learned the lesson, whether from these recent examples or from the multitude of earlier ones, the moment you cease to crowd your lists with the cheap, the cynical, the catchpenny, the scabrous, the patently insincere.

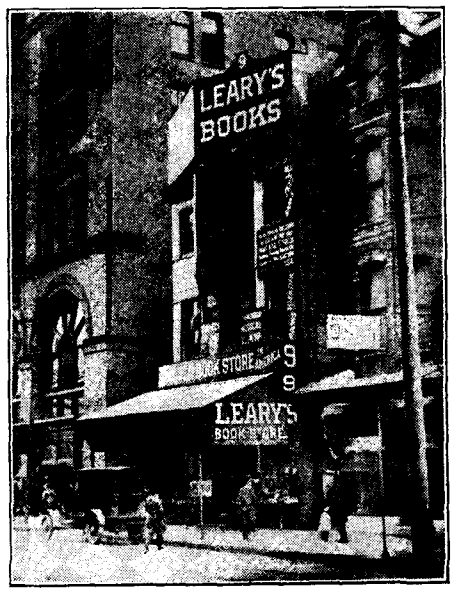
We are easily enough to be convinced. All you have to do is cut off the present oversupply of made-to-order serials reprinted from the popular magazines, the fictional portraits of characters so civilized that their only connection with the quaint old common decencies is to jeer at them, the worshipping dissections of maimed intelligences and wills, the pseudo-biographies revealing all that nobody can ever know about the characters of history, the maunderings of expressionist freaks who believe everything has been said that can be said in syntax, the remote descendants and feeble dilutions of "Ulysses" and "The Sun Also Rises" and "Point Counterpoint"—these and the various other types and modes of derivative writing in which you register your own bafflement and your disrespect for the public mentality. You are making your greatest concessions, not to the public at all, not even to your own sense of what is worth while, but to the ephemeral fashions being followed at the moment by the rest of your guild. Because this is true, it is becoming hard for the ordinary outsider to tell one of you from another by his fruits.

The measure of a publisher is, after all, what he chooses to publish. Salesmanship, be it ever so modern, ever so potent, cannot be made to take the place of editorial judgment. Some of you are letting your sales departments make up your minds for you about what you shall publish or refuse to publish. In doing this, you forget that your sales departments have (very excusably) little or no concern with getting your output any farther along than the bookshops. What they give you is a selling judgment, not a reading judgment—and it is no wonder that the book trade is today bemoaning its hard conditions, when you publishers constantly ask it to live by the disposal of ostensible reading matter produced to be reviewed, advertised, sold, displayed, anything under heaven but read.

Others of you have skimped and starved your editorial departments until they are nothing but clerical apparatus for the automatic handling of rejections. The excuse for this policy, is that, since you practically never receive an unsolicited manuscript fit for publication, there would be nothing for a first-rate editorial department to do. Your readers' reports are written by hacks who have learned the trick of satisfying you that they have read the books they report on. You are offered sorry stuff by unknown persons because you publish so much sorry stuff by known persons. Give us better books to read, and you will get unexpected manuscripts worth serious consideration, and will then need competent editors to consider them. Or get the competent editors first, and listen to what they tell you, and your lists will soon enough reveal to the world of American authorship that something has occurred—and to the world of American readership, too. Publishing has been conducted for many decades on the simple principle of expending the most effort and the best effort on the task of finding material worth publishing; and that principle is not improvable. You, one and all, have let yourselves be scared into the belief that changed conditions have latterly turned the problem of distribution into the one serious problem—and the condition of your business today is a staggering comment on your revised policy of putting cart before horse. There is no magic about even the most improved technique of distribution which can make up for the lack of something worth distributing.

There is fine work being done today—work that, if ever published, will become part of literature as Hawthorne, Melville, and Henry James are part of literature. There is an audience for this work which will support it handsomely whenever you give it the chance; and, unlike the bulk of what you are publishing, it will stay profitably alive for years and decades to come, not be forgotten in a matter of weeks. Also, there would be a great deal more such work if you showed a little more hospitality and vision for what there is. Beyond a rational doubt the quality of contemporary publishing is such as to paralyze sincerity in the beginning author, for it transcends most human nature to do one's best at an art of communication when the way to get a hearing is to do something not so good. You, gentlemen of the publishing houses, are keeping many of the potential best books from being written at all.

All of you are moaning about what hard times these are for the publisher; that is the burden of nearly every letter I receive or see from you. And hard times they are, indeed—for the sort of publishing you have lately been devoting yourselves to. On the other hand, they might be the best times we have had in a generation for the publishing you could do if you were neither scared nor lazy. Have you lost sight of the reliable, oft-proved principle that the leanest of times are the best of times for better things? When the cupboard is empty even materialists begin to wonder about God. When the ship is in danger of foundering, even infidels can be got to attend devotions in the cabin. When people are starving they lose interest in condiments and want food. There are plenty of folk who would swallow almost anything from you when their affairs were flourishing and they took no time to choose or to think. Today those same folk are to be held only by those superior things which you are afraid to offer them. You are letting your standards sag to the basement just when the requirements of your potential audience are well started for the upper floors. At no previous time can publishing as a whole have pulled so obstinately in the direction opposite to that of people's wants and needs. You have been provided with clues enough to the truth, in the first-rate successes achieved by a few first-rate things and the consistent failure of scores and hundreds of the things you have published with condescension in the hope of making money. But it seems not to occur to you to follow the clues. Like the gentlemen of Hollywood, you do not have very much sense of the plain American actualities on which your ultimate prosperity depends; and your whole mode of living and transacting business, like theirs, tends to cut you off from the chance of normal self-education in these actualities. As Mr. Alexander Woollcott lately remarked apropos of "The Good Earth," "One may be permitted to conclude that the average American is not such a fool as he looks"—that of a mere visionary idealist, I hasten to record my full realization that not *every* good book published is going to make a fortune, or even to make a profit. That is not the point at all. What I do maintain, and with generations of history to support me, is that the publication of good books *as a policy* is more profitable than any other policy. Publish what you thoroughly respect yourself, and you will



THE OLD LEARY SHOP, IN PHILADELPHIA, A FAVORITE HAUNT OF BOOK LOVERS.

have at least as many and as sweeping successes as on the present system of pandering to the assumed requirements of a market with which you have little contact. Also, you will have at the worst no greater proportion of failures than now, and the average failure will probably be not so crushing. It has actually paid heretofore, and would pay as well today, to operate on a basis of faith in the public. I mean that it would pay in terms of the immediate and indispensable cash dividends.

Over and above this advantage, such a

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policy would subserve also the more imponderable—and vastly more important—aims of publishing. What are these aims? Well, one of them is the gradual enlargement of a pitifully small reading public which you are at present teaching that it can get along without current books. Another is the production by tangible encouragement and example of many good books which now go unwritten because their potential authors see no excuse for imagining that you would be interested. Still another, of tremendous economic and social importance in the long run, is the coming of that desirable state of affairs in which all of you publishers shall cease to be competitors struggling to live at one another's expense—which is what you will remain as long as you go in for a competitive cheapening of standards—and become the colleagues and collaborators you ought to be. For I suppose you understand—"in theory"—that it is only for poor or indifferent books that the market is hopelessly limited. The more good books you publish, the more you may; and the more of you there are doing it, the more room there is for others. As you chiefly operate in this season of 1932, you are indeed taking bread out of one another's mouths; but pluck up your courage a little, assert your tastes, stop paying so much heed to the negligible opinions of the little loud collection of folk who make a life work of writing about writing, and you will soon find that you are creating business for one another on an astonishing scale.

We, the book-hungry reading public of decent average Americans, will see to that. We have only one way of communicating our desires to you, or even our existence: to let your usual offerings as severely alone as we are now doing, while swarming like bees upon every "Good Earth" and "Shadows on the Rock." We have proved that we require such things from you for our sustenance; and, self-evidently, you need us for yours. How, when we speak to you over and over in such unmistakable terms, can you still delude yourselves into thinking that we do not know what we want, or that there are not enough of us to count? Where do you expect to come out in another generation or so if you keep on refusing to discover us? And, more important still, where is eivilization going to come out if you allow the only channels for the flow of good new literature to become and to remain choked with soot?

[*The editors of this* Review *agree heartily with the tenets of this important and forthright article, but feel that the regular practice of some publishers and that the changes of policy inaugurated recently by these, are in accord with the views of the author.*]

A Skilled Entertainer

HUGH THOMSON—His Art, His Letters, His Humor, and His Charm. By M. H. SPIELMANN and WALTER JERROLD. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1931.

Reviewed by WILLIAM M. IVINS, JR.

THE reviewer finds that he is greatly puzzled by the book that lies open before him. Should he give an account of the volume and of its contents, or should he talk about some of the issues that, all unintentionally, it raises? Should he be a reporter or a critic, or, perhaps, should he ride his own hobby? For your reviewer is no professional and knows nothing of the ethics or the etiquette of the task that he has assumed.

For a quarter of a century Hugh Thomson was the outstanding and best beloved of all English book illustrators. The "'nineties" came and went, Burne Jones illustrated Chaucer, Beardsley illustrated Mallory, Crane and Greenaway issued their color books, Caldecott dramatized the nursery rhymes, but Thomson continued to be the illustrator of predilection for a large proportion of the nice people who followed Austin Dobson into the eighteenth century and artificiality.

Thomson was born in June, 1860, at Coleraine, County Derry, Ireland. His grandfather was a farmer of Ballygobbin near Ballymoney, and came of a Scottish border family. His father, apparently, was an employee in some business house at Coleraine, and subsequently for a while had a small draper's shop at Kilrea. Hugh attended the Coleraine Model School, where he went through the ordinary curriculum, and at the age of sixteen was apprenticed to a firm of linen manufacturers. From earliest youth he had scribbled and he wanted to become an artist, but his family, not unnaturally, had little sympathy with his desires. In 1877 he prepared an illuminated address to his old schoolmaster, which, being called to the attention of one of the partners in Marcus Ward & Co., resulted in his entering their chromolithographic works at Belfast as a letterer. John Vinycomb, the supervisor of the shop, took a fancy to the lad and encouraged him in his ambition, so that, after failing to become one of the firm's draughtsmen, toward the end of 1883 he went to London with a collection of his drawings and illustrations. Early in 1884 he became a salaried draughtsman for Macmillan's *English Illustrated Magazine*, which at the time was edited by J. Comyns Carr.

This connection brought him into contact with many of the literary and artistic contributors to the *Magazine*, among whom may be mentioned Austin Dobson, Henry James, Swinburne, Andrew Lang, Stevenson, Edmund Gosse, Alfred Parsons, Randolph Caldecott, Walter Crane, George du Maurier, and Harry Furniss. His first drawing to be published in the *Magazine* accompanied an article by H. D. Traill in the number for June, 1884. His first book illustrations, seemingly quite commonplace work, appeared in 1884 in Alfred St. Johnston's "Charlie Asgard." In the number of the *Magazine* for December 1884 he had a dozen drawings illustrating Austin Dobson's "The Squire at Vauxhall." Early the next year he began his series of drawings for the de Coverly papers, and with their publication in book form in October, 1886, his reputation was made. In 1889 he ceased to be a salaried employee of Messrs. Macmillan, but continued to work for them until the end of his life, though taking commissions from other publishers as well. In May 1918 a civil list pension of £75 was granted to him. In May 1920, while talking, he suddenly fell dead.

Surrounded by loving friends, happily married to a devoted wife, taking delight in the companionship of his son, admired and respected on all sides, Hugh Thomson, if we may believe his biographers, led a delightful, an amusing, and an eventless life. From the time that as an untaught boy of twenty-three he settled in London, everything went his way. There was no drama in his life, little development, and no evidence is adduced that he ever thought or felt very deeply. For many years his principal preoccupation or worry was lest E. A. Abbey should publish a set of illustrations for a text that he himself was engaged upon.

Much has been said and written about Thomson's work, but very little about his actual accomplishment. His photographs show him to us as a pleasant, frank-faced, smiling person. His drawings reveal him in the same character. Sunny and irresponsible, unhappy with reality or dreams, he floated upon the happy surface of life, and was the best beloved illustrator of two generations of people with literary taste. To such texts as the "Ballad of Beau Brocade" and "Cranford" he provided a tender and a sprightly gloss that enabled people of another time and another life to visualize their slender, gentle comedy in a profusion of pretty clothes and nice oldfashioned things that was as false to thought and fact as it was true to sentimentality and artificiality. Lacking imagination and deep feeling, having no draughtsmanship and no power of composition, his bubbling ingenuity and facile invention, and especially the sweetness of his boyish mind, carried him as illustrator straight to the hearts of well-educated, inartistic people of all kinds. Whenever he essayed a picture he failed, but whenever he made an historiated initial or drew a vignette in which he could represent the costumes and furniture of long ago he was apt to be very pleasing. In his odd way he was much more a collector of old costumes and old furniture than a draughtsman of merit. He never learned to construct a figure or to draw a valid hand or foot or face. None of his figures has any weight or solidity. Composition was something of which he had not the faintest conception. But he loved to represent things that nice people collect, and in looking at his drawings people saw those things and were so charmed by the sentimentality that surrounded them that they forgot to look at the actual work of the draughtsman.

AN ILLUSTRATION FOR THACKERAY'S "VANITY FAIR," BY HUGH THOMSON.

All this raises the question of illustration. What is the function of the illustrator? What should he do? What should be the criterion of judgment of his work? But these questions are too big and too complicated to be discussed at this place. Even were they to be gone into at length, and the verdict as drawn from them be all against everything that Thomson did, the one great fact would remain that he gave keen pleasure to a very large number of the nicest people in the world. Short of having been a great artist in his own right, it is doubtful whether anything that could be said of him would have given him more pleasure than that, for he was a modest man who preferred affection to love and who never took himself as being more than a skilled entertainer.

This life of him is a short octavo of 289 pages, and it weighs three pounds on the kitchen scales—so that, although it is a small book, it is one that cannot be held with comfort in the hand. And for a book about Hugh Thomson that means that someone has blundered. Its text, lacking all critical appraisement in the light of general ideas, is written in the peculiar mixture of sentimentality and unimportant fact that seems to have become the accepted standard to which all books about recently deceased English artists must conform. Thus just as it cannot be held in the hand neither can it be read on the table, which, for a book about Hugh Thomson, means that someone else has made another blunder.

His Highness

HINDOO HOLIDAY. By J. R. ACKERLEY. New York: The Viking Press. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

WHEN praise of a book is quoted from such eminents as David Garnett, Evelyn Waugh, J. B. Priestley, J. C. Squire, Carl Van Vechten, and Humbert Wolfe, and it is cited as a sensational success all over its dustcover, this reviewer, at least, is inclined to harden his heart and become stubborn toward it. Isn't it, surely, being overpraised? We have read also that Mr. Ackerley's Indian journal is fit to be put in the same class with E. M. Forster's "A Passage to India." Who then is this phenomenon, anyway? He is listed before this as the author of one play, "The Prisoners of War," otherwise we know little or nothing about him save for his modest appearance in the present book.

We started reading Mr. Ackerley's diary with sternness, but were almost immediately captivated. It doesn't lay claim to being too entirely accurate about India. Its chief merit is that his highness the Maharajah emerges as a most delightful and peculiar character. The quiet entertainment afforded by the volume is indubitable. His Highness's attempts at an English vocabulary, for instance, with his naive and pungent comments thereupon, are so well set forth that that aspect of the book alone is worth the price of admission. The monarch is always trying a word first, becoming impressed with its ridiculousness, and asking its meaning afterward. Here is a good sample:

> During our drive today His Highness returned to the subject of the ancient Greeks.
>
> "Would you call me an imaginary man?" he asked.
>
> I said I thought it suited him very well.
>
> "There was an English lady staying with me once," he continued, "who said to me, 'Maharajah, you soar like a skylark and then fall on the ground.'"
>
> He was overcome with merriment and hid his face in his sleeve. "Wha did she mean?" he asked, when he hac recovered himself.

His Highness is better than a man actually "imaginary," and so are the other Hindus who adorn these pages. Some of the Anglo-Indians, for that matter, are as "imaginary" as can be! There is an Alice-in-Wonderland quality about most things in the Hindu native state of Chhokrapur, the name of which Mr. Ackerley invented to disguise an actual name. The Maharajah loves the writings of Rider Haggard and Marie Corelli. He is also ecstatic about ancient Greek and Roman civilization—though he inquires along the way, "What Is Parthenon?"—and would like to revive their grandeurs and glories in his own realm. Mr. Ackerley describes well a performance given by His Highness's Gods, and also one by a party of traveling players, though the latter description becomes a trifle tedious.

The tiresome Abdul, the author's tutor in Hindi, with his endless requests, becomes a great character. The Dewan is sympathetically drawn. Mr. Ackerley's explanations of Hindu customs and manners, rendered incidentally, are interesting and clear. His book will rank among the most suave and amusedly intelligent of journals. It is the opposite of insular, entirely human and appreciative of an alien environment and its peculiar characters.

Such a book as this is far better reading than most current fiction. Here is the breath of life shown forth in actual diversified humanity amid the lights and shades of the land of the sacred cow. The combination of occidental detachment and a predilection for the oriental, with which the author has written his book, gives it a highly individual flavor. Mr. Ackerley has a natural and unforced literary style, an intuition for just the right accent and shading. The wild, childish, shrewdness of the singular potentate he pictures does not easily fade from the memory!

A hitherto unpublished novel by Florence Barclay, author of "The Rosary," is to be issued in the autumn in London.

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The First Methodists

JOHN WESLEY. By C. E. VULLIAMY. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by ROLLIN LYNDE HARTT

THIS adoring biography is at the same time a portrait gallery of Wesley's colleagues, and if in depicting his hero Mr. Vulliamy uses always the discreet technique dear to miniaturists, he depicts his minor dramatis personæ in high color and with a daring brushwork worthy of Franz Hals. Here we have Brother Charles, the galloping enthusiast; Whitefield, prince of impassioned spell-binders; Lady Huntingdon, a bit touched in her wits; the various silly women with whom, one after another, Wesley thought himself in love; the ridiculous and sublimely vulgar jade he married; and, with far reach, a swarm of half-martyred Methodist preachers, as picturesque as they were heroic.

An intensely interesting, delightful book, therefore, but not as a biography. The author is too indulgent throughout in his treatment of John Wesley and at times almost timid, playing up Wesley's manifest virtues and not daring to make good copy out of his much more entertaining faults, some of which were funny. Besides, John Wesley himself was far too sane and methodical and slow-moving to stand out to advantage among his more impulsive associates, and, enormous as were the changes that he underwent, from High Churchman at Oxford to field preacher and bait for mob violence, every step in the transformation, as Mr. Vulliamy points out, was a result either of circumstances or of special influence brought to bear.

Wesley never took to field preaching by choice. It was because churches were closed to him. His conception of faith as a tremendous emotional experience he got from the Moravians. So all through. Only his foolish love affairs showed originality, and foolish enough they were, as the poor fellow was never in love.

For purposes of drama, any one of his associates outshines him. Take for instance the forgotten but superbly colorful Berridge, Methodist preacher at Everton. Mr. Vulliamy tells us:

> Inside the church at Everton, while Berridge was preaching or conducting his service, some of the people fainted and fell quietly to the floor, others roared and screamed, sinking down in horrible contortions; at one moment they felt themselves dropping into the blazing cavity of hell, and at the next they were rising in ecstasies of joy and gratitude. Those who were less affected stood on the seats of the pews in order to see the disturbed congregation.

Though very few such manifestations attended his own preaching, John Wesley was inclined to take them seriously. Not so Brother Charles—or at least not always. "The fits" he called them, and frequently suspected humbug or gin. Mr. Vulliamy quotes Charles as recording that on a certain day

> one who came from the ale-house, drunk, was pleased to fall into a pit for my entertainment, and beat himself heartily. I thought it a pity to hinder him; so, instead of singing over him, we left him to recover at his leisure. Another, a girl, as she began her cry, I ordered to be carried out. Her convulsion was so violent as to take away the use of her limbs, till they left her without the door. Then immediately she found her legs and walked off.

The modern reader will be prone to believe that cheap gin and cheap whiskey accounted in some measure for the extreme nervous instability prevalent among the barbarous masses to whom the early Methodists chiefly preached. He will recognize, moreover, that the emotional effect of early Methodist preaching owed much to the fact that its appeal reached a class wholly neglected by the Church of England and a class to whom religious appeal of any sort was completely novel. Terrific, consequently, was its force—the more so as these were simple, ignorant folk, capable of intense, because unthinking, faith. Under that force they blew up. Perhaps we are to blame, on occasion, for not blowing up, ourselves. For, either the things we hear in church are so, or they are not. If they are so, then they are tremendous enough to explode anybody.

How vividly the author of this vigorous book pictures the England of John Wesley's day! It is that, and the bold portrayal of minor characters that gives the book its charm. You race through it. But John Wesley, Methodism's Apostle Saul, seems never quite real. He is as steel-engraving-like in these pages as a Methodist George Washington. All that he did we grant. But all that he was we neither see nor feel. What we often see and feel is the author's too obtrusive reverence for him, and we have a somewhat hesitant regard for the adoring biography at best.

Perhaps this same writer would have given us as convincing a portrait of John Wesley as we could wish for were not John Wesley at most points an unrecorded personality. "There is no contemporary portrait of Wesley by a great writer," says Mr. Vulliamy, "or even by a very competent writer. . . There is no Methodist Boswell; no shrewd yet loving observer; no scribbling journalistic friend." It may well be that Mr. Vulliamy has given us all the John Wesley that we have any right to expect and rather a little more, but in any case he has given us a most entertaining account of early Methodism and of the England which it so amazingly transformed.

Satan Invents "Art"

By LINCOLN STEFFENS

STROLLING with Satan on the Avenue can be very annoying; his complacency rides one's nerves. He nods at this, he nods at that. He will stop now and then to look long and smile, and he has an irritating habit of making a mechanical clucking sound in his throat when he sees something going all his way. And he seems to find most things going his way.

"Don't you ever happen upon anything going against you?" I asked the other day when he had been staring for minutes into an art shop, and nodding and clucking.

He turned slowly, smiling around to cluck at me. "You don't care for success, do you?"

We walked on amid the noises and the sights of the city, he smug with his mighty satisfaction. I felt the urge again to spoil his devilish enjoyment.

"Aren't you ever defeated?"

He looked at me, and it was with approval, too. One of his meanest, one of his most annoying, one of his most puzzling, complacencies is his manifest enjoyment of me.

I repeated my challenge warmly:

"Don't you ever get licked?"

"N-o-o-o," he clucked, "not in the long run." And he bored his answer in with one eye smiling, the other not smiling.

"Aren't you ever worried, like us humans, over some tough problem?"

That got him a bit. He looked away and a frown—the shadow of a frown took the blooming brightness of his stony face. It was my turn to grin; I had annoyed him. But he had to answer; that was our bargain.

"Y-e-e-s-s," he said—like that, reluctantly—"temporarily I have been balked and I have—worried over my troubles, but—"

"Tell me about some of your worst troubles, or just one of them."

He strode on in silence for a block; that, too, was an unpleasant way of his; to ponder at his leisure the answer I had learned to feel had to come. So now we strolled along to a crossing, halted for the traffic signal till the cop on the corner spied him, ran over to hold up the cars that had the right of way, and majestically let him pass, with me. He and the policeman both had expressions of recognition on their faces, recognition and respect. When we were on the other curb we went on walking, and Satan spoke.

"I was recalling, as I stood before the window back there—I was living over one of my early struggles that made it look for awhile as if I were lost. It was way back among the beginnings of what you would call history, when those cave men were taken with a sudden impulse to draw the things they had seen—buffalo, deer—you know—on the walls of their caves. They discovered that, with lines and crude colors, they could make designs that made them and other men make—animals and—"

His hard face softened; it was never so little, but there it was—a weakening, and his voice became almost human.

"That was a crisis in the life of man and—in my life also; a grave emergency calling for all that has been left me of power, of intelligence, of . . . virtue."

"But why?" I exclaimed, as he paused, maybe to suffer. "What was so awful about drawing a few crude beasts on a rough wall?"

He gave me a painful glance with a mystifying gleam of pity in it.

"Ever see those crude—scrawlings?" he asked.

I had, I said, nodding impatiently.

"I see you never did," he answered, and there you have another annoying trick of his. He will take up anything you say, reverse it and hand it back to you, accepted. And this time when I repeated that I had seen good reproductions of those cave-men's drawings, he asked me another question. Did I ever see drawings like them by children now-a-days? I said I had not. He said he had, "and they are just as dangerous now as in the beginning, only now I know what to do about them and I do that. Or, I get it done."

"But what is it that's so menacing to you—in such kid playing?"

He halted, sharp, and he halted me. We were both startled, apparently. I spoke first.

"But do tell me what was so alarming in those cave pictures? I can't see any danger in those savages playing, as children play, with pencils."

"That's it," he said, "you do see it." And he looked in my face with some respect that faded into a comfortable smile. "You see it, you say it and—you don't know it." He almost laughed and walked on. I was hurt but I was not defeated, so I ran along after him and reminded him of our compact:

"You have to tell me anything I ask—"

"That you can understand," he added, and he had me there. That was the agreement. But I had one more call.

"Give me a chance to understand. Why did that drawing trouble you?"

"Because, don't you see, those children of men were playing," he said, and, emboldened, I imagine, by my wonder, he spoke on fast. "They were drawing for fun, with joy, and so—"

"And so—"

"They were—making things as God does. They were creating and so—learning—the divine power and glory of—making something out of nothing, for nothing. If they had gone on—. But I stopped it."

"How?"

"Oh, well, at first I spoke to the elders and priests about it. They had been enjoying it, you see. They used to watch the drawing, line by line, talk about it, suggest corrections and other lines. It was becoming a game and they might all have learned to—play and to—create. I thundered to the old people, one by one, that it was wicked to make images, and to the priests I whispered that it was new. And that is when I became worried."

"Worried?"

"Yes, the priests and the elders took my alarm and they forbade the drawing of images, of any living thing, but the young men only sneaked off back in the darker caves so narrow that the fat folk could not follow."

"Hah, hah!" I rejoiced. "You could not put your commands over. The boys and girls would not obey."

"Yes," he admitted, "I was defeated—for a while; a long while. It looked pretty bad. I had spies watch and report to the chiefs and to the parents, but the vice grew and became secret. I know how humans feel when they think they have reached the limit, my limit, to their limitless power of deed and endurance."

He sighed and was silent, till, suddenly he remembered. "But I won—at last. I learned something that has been useful to me ever since. I dealt with the young men themselves."

"How? What did you do?"

Satan turned in to a side street where there were few passers-by, and he whispered his wisdom to me.

"I went to each one of the drawers of life. I bent over them one by one and I whispered: 'You must not do what you are doing, not the way you are doing it; not for the mere joy of it. You must know, and you shall never forget, that this drawing is not play, it is—Art."

He stood up straight, he fixed me with his eye and aloud he repeated: "Art."

Then he walked on, nodding.

"That's what I taught; that's what I teach, and—" all complacency again—"I have never had any serious trouble since with Art."

Gold-Digger

A GIRL OUGHT TO WORK. By CLAUDE BINYON. New York: Harrison Smith and Robert K. Haas. 1932. $1.50.

SINCE the success of "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" several writers have had various cracks at "the same kind of thing." Now the editor of the Hollywood column of *Variety* presents, in her own words, a common or garden little gold-digger named Elsie. The book is composed of her letters to her mother back in Chicago. The illustrations are by Hermann Post, and they aren't a patch on Covarrubias. Elsie was not at all appealing to this reviewer. She is cheap as dirt and an utter moron. If her adventures with her gent friends are of any importance, then the random remarks of a guttersnipe would make a great novel. Elsie merely makes one think far more poorly of the common people than they deserve. To laugh at her puts one in the class of those who would laugh at physical deformity. For she is mentally deformed, and it doesn't strike us as funny. Doubtless she exists in droves in Hollywood. We don't know. But if so, we shudder. Miss Loos's book had humor to offset the vulgarity. We don't see that "A Girl Ought to Work" has any real humor, unless you are amused by a combination of coarseness and imbecility. You may gather from this that we didn't like the book.

A Balanced Ration for a Week's Reading

THE CLINIC OF DR. AICADRE. By MURIEL HARRIS. *Harpers.*

A novel in which French peasant psychology is displayed against a dramatic characterization the subject of which is a French physician.

THE FACE OF ENGLAND. By EDMUND BLUNDEN. *Longmans, Green.*

A poet's transcription in prose of the English scene.

JOHN WESLEY. By C. E. VULLIAMY. *Scribners.*

An entertaining account of early Methodism and of its founder.

The Saturday Review of Literature

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Myth and Reality in America

THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM IN AMERICA. By M. J. BONN. Translated from the German by WINIFRED RAY. With an Introduction by GEORGE S. COUNTS. New York: The John Day Company. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by WALTER MILLIS

GAZING fascinated upon our boisterous, irrational, and apparently untamable economy, Europe has for years been the victim of some very mixed emotions. She watched the dizzy pinnacles of prosperity arise with a kind of fearsome envy, an admiration coupled with dismay. She received their subsequent collapse with an astonishment not untinged by relief; there was a distinct note of satisfaction in her voice as she sorrowfully told us that it was no more than she had expected. But the collapse continued; Europe found herself sliding toward the abyss quite as rapidly as we were, and as the "economic blizzard" howled more fiercely through her bones she turned to us with a new combination of hope and of alarm. The fellow passenger whom you may appraise rather superciliously (and superficially) when you encounter him in the liner's smoking room appears in a very different light when the ship is foundering, the lifeboats are going overside, and the steerage passengers have an ugly look.

It is with a new earnestness that Europe is today asking what is, really, happening in America—and what it is likely to do either to her or for her. Thus only a few weeks ago a German newspaper man, Mr. Fred Ringel, was publishing his "America as Americans See It," an attempt to explain us to the Germans through a collection of essays written by the Americans themselves. Mr. Ringel's chief interest was in the exploration of our soul. In the present volume a leading German economist, Professor Bonn, turns a more sober and professional attention to our body—to the economic, political, and social facts underlying the emotional surfaces of our spectacular history. Are we sound enough in limb to pull our oar in the catastrophe? How much stamina is there in our economic machinery? Is our digestion strong enough to face the hardtack and cold water in prospect, or will we recoil to join the Russians in the steerage? Will we see things as a world crisis, or will our provincialism lead us to rush the boats, to grab (as everybody else is doing) for the life preservers of debt payments and tariff protection, thus worsening the common disaster?

Such are the questions which Europe is now asking; such are the questions to which Professor Bonn's analysis leads and for some of which he suggests possible answers. The title given to the American edition is distinctly misleading; Professor Bonn is examining facts rather than predicting our ruin, and the title under which his book was first published last year in Germany—"Prosperity: Myth and Reality in American Economic Life"—is a much more accurate prospectus. He began by methodically surveying the ground. He travelled, indeed, over rather more of America than the great majority of Americans are ever likely to see, noting the various developments of our mechanized civilization, from the folding beds on the doors of New York apartments to the electric iceboxes in California bungalows, from the scarcity of domestic servants to the prevalence of instalment selling. He noted as well those soft spots in our economy—coal, textiles, railroads, and especially the debt-burdened farmer—which may have induced faint doubts in the dazzling days of 1928 and the two-car garage.

Thus he erects the familiar stage setting; and he does it well, too, even though the effect may remind an American reader a little of that artificial exactitude for which Mr. Belasco was once famous. It is too realistic to be quite real, but that does not matter; Professor Bonn moves on to the collapse, its causes, the attempts to combat it, the reason for their failure, and the possible implications of the resultant situation. It is in this analysis that American readers will find a great deal that is suggestive. The sober eye of external criticism sees points that they may have overlooked, and relationships of cause and effect that may not have occurred to them.

The immediate cause of the collapse, Professor Bonn now sees, was the action of the Bank of England in raising its discount rate on September 26, 1929, thus withdrawing the foreign money which, sucked into the Wall Street whirlpool, had sustained the last dizzy flights of prosperity. The ultimate cause was the "misuse of capital." The capitalist world "has formed the habit of conveying credit, the elasticity of which is at the present day exceedingly large, mainly into the channels of production." Our vast foreign lending was a part of this misguided process—a process incidentally which went on as dangerously elsewhere as in the United States.

> The sums due to the United States were to be advanced to the debtors in the form of fresh credits. American industrialists labored under the delusion that consumers can be cultivated much as cress or radishes can be sown and plucked in one's garden in the Spring and have accordingly enlarged their production capacity indefinitely, and at the same time helped to finance the construction of new production plants throughout the world.

The crash is the automatic readjustment of the balance.

> This very painful devaluation is the remedy by which capitalism restores order to economic chaos, punishing those—but unfortunately not those alone—who are responsible for it. In this it employs the method of expropriation by means of destruction of value or depreciation—the capitalist form of socialization, which is more radical, more ruthless, and more sensible than the ordinary attempts at socialization.

If only all our economic commentators could get that simple truth firmly fixed within their hats, we should be saved a vast deal of confusion and acres of footling newsprint. We might even have been saved the first mistaken attempts to halt the downward rush. As Professor Bonn points out, the "premature intervention" to bolster wages, stock market prices, and capital values only obstructed the "healing process"; by tying up instead of writing off capital it had "exactly the same effect as the original mistake of building bigger plants than an industry can employ and pay dividends on. . . . Thus the attempt to check the crisis has entailed the continuance of the crisis." Writing before the imminent collapse of last winter and the arrival of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to avert it, Professor Bonn has nothing to say upon the present attempt at "reflation." His study is thus incomplete as far as immediate conditions go. But there is a good deal of penetrating commonsense in his general analysis.

And as for the broader future? Professor Bonn believes (no doubt rightly) that in many ways the crisis will have a salutary effect, on the economic development of America as well as on the relations between America and Europe. Indeed, it would seem that we cannot help learning something from it. But he continues:

> From another point of view, however, the psychological effect of the crisis is highly unfavorable. An earthquake has shaken Olympus. It has a very sobering effect on believers when the images of the gods are shattered and their pedestals reduced to fragments. . . . But if the toppling walls of the temples smash in the roofs of the neighboring huts, and the dying gods extend to those about them not protection but destruction, then the believer's heart is filled not merely with pity but with bitter doubt and blind hate.

Will we be sobered into an internationalism appropriate to the real extent whereby we have become linked into the world economy? Or will we go Bolshevist? Professor Bonn does not know; but he points out that, despite our tradition of political liberalism, a nation which could fasten an eighteenth amendment upon itself might not necessarily recoil from the "brutal coercion" implicit in the Russian revaluation. Ah, well, an American will be readier than the European to guess that we may after all only rock along in the future much as we have done in the past. Yet Professor Bonn is right; the "old magic" has received a terrible sock in the eye, and after a few more such blows, if they come, the field may be open to new ones.

THE FRENZIED STOCK MARKET OF OCTOBER 5, 1929, AS DEPICTED BY ROLLIN KIRBY. From "Highlights" (Payson).

Civic Training

THE MAKING OF CITIZENS: A Comparative Study of Methods of Civic Training. By CHARLES EDWARD MERRIAM. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by CLINTON ROGERS WOODRUFF

UNDER the auspices of the University of Chicago a comprehensive study of the methods of making citizens pursued in Great Britain, Italy, Soviet Russia, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, and America was undertaken on a large scale. Now in this volume, the ninth of the series, Professor Merriam compares the eight systems thus studied and draws some very interesting conclusions. It is plain, as he points out, "that the result will not attain the dignity of exact measurement, but will rather be in the nature of a rough tracing of types in widely different settings. It is hoped, however, that these outlines will be sufficiently clear to set forth the main situations arising in these processes of political control and raise some important problems regarding their further development."

Discussion of loyalties properly occupies a large space in the book. The regional political feeling, or loyalty to the region, he believes, is rapidly weakening under the influence of modern communication and transportation; ethic factors in the states under consideration tend to decline in importance, although in other parts of the world this is not true. The religio-political struggle for control over human behavior continues and in some of the states there have been bitter struggles within the past generation. In a conspicuously industrial age the solidarity of the workers tends to increase. The influence of language and literature continues important even with the sweep of modern intercommunication, and its political value tends to survive in the states under discussion.

Obedience is now rendered not to a person, but to the political community; and not because of command primarily, but by reason of assumed consent. Nominal equality of civil and political rights, and theoretical recognition of the importance and value of the human personality as such, have profoundly altered the nature of the government. The recurring relations of domination and subordination in political behavior continue to find expression in political life, but the morale so essential to the efficient functioning of modern democratic states presupposes types of coöperation and participation in the exercises of political power, as well as attitudes of responsibility for common affairs. Those who command do so, not merely because of their office, or because of their personality, but because of the general recognition that they serve a useful function in the community—a function in terms of the general welfare as interpreted in the last analysis by the generality of the folk in the state.

Modern systems of civic education, Dr. Merriam believes, are fundamentally defective in their overemphasis on the role of the inflexible elements in the state and in their failure to recognize adequately the role of invention and adaptation. It is, of course, true that general areas of human behavior lie in the domain of the automatic or unconscious, or that of unreflecting habit developed by constant repetition to a point where no conscious effort is required. The values of habit are, everyone must recognize, very great, and no one would venture to suggest the abandonment of the advantages they bring with them, but the watchword of modern life is change and adjustment even to the point of restlessness and dissatisfaction. Unquestionably, readjustment is, and for some time will continue to be, a larger part of the life of our time, at least in the Western world. Politics cannot continue to live upon tradition and force, two of its great allies in the past, but must rely upon invention, adaptation, adjustment, if it is to continue as a useful part of that modern life in which conscious control over human evolution looms up larger and larger.

While Mr. Merriam's book is designed as a summary of the preceding volumes, it has individual value and significance because of the comments on the findings of the several authors and the observations on them. Merriam's work is not that of editor or even commentator, but of an author with ideas of his own, suggested by, it is true, or based on the facts gathered by others, but after all a contribution of his own.

Clinton Rogers Woodruff, who is a lawyer and one of the most active workers for better government in Philadelphia, was a member of the Pennsylvania legislature for two terms, has been president of the Philadelphia Civil Service Commission, and is now a special assistant city solicitor. He is the author of numerous books and magazine articles, and is the editor of the National Municipal League series.

The London *Observer*, in its column entitled "A Hundred Years Ago," prints the following:

SIR WALTER SCOTT.—Extract of a letter from London, dated June 21:—"Sir Walter Scott cannot live many days, nor would it be desirable that he should. His mind is entirely gone. He cannot sit up, and can scarcely articulate. The author of 'Waverly' cannot write his name! His two grandchildren (Mr. Lockhart's sons) were taken last Wednesday to bid him an eternal adieu. He had sent them some toys from Holland, which they brought with them. The old passion for verse returned on the 'Last Minstrel,' and he said to his infant grandchildren:

> What in Holland Dutchmen make,
> Here in England boys do break.
> —"Scotsmen."

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The Bowling Green

Human Being

XXVI. SAYING GOODBYE

THE move beyond the Great Divide of the Morningside cliff did change the view, in more ways than one. Richard, though not fanciful, now realized that there had been a sense of security on the lower level. To look up toward the Cathedral and the trumpeting angel gave a comfortable feeling that the world was a stable place, watched over by spiritual powers. But the region of Columbia seemed more naked to the winds of living. The great façade of the university library, and the sight of so many alert youths on that broad terrace of learning, are alarming to a humble man who thinks sadly how much more they know than he.

He noticed at once that on that hilltop they were much nearer the War. Battleships came up the Hudson, and the tomb of General Grant is much more impressive than its neighbor, the grave of the Amiable Child. That autumn a German submarine visited Newport, and Herman Schmaltz, always cautious, gave up making business trips to Boston by the Fall River boat. Gladys's favorite excursion was now the ledge round Grant's Tomb, where she scampered on plump legs and played hide and seek behind the corners. The new apartment was a great pride, a symbol of promotion; it gave Lucille intense pleasure to travel by subway or bus rather than the poor old L, and to mention her telephone number as *Riverside* so-and-so. But it was not a place to settle down for tranquillity, as they had hopefully imagined. There was little tranquillity that year .

The War had its effect on small affairs as well as great. It made changes in the Erskine itineraries. Herman Schmaltz, to everyone's surprise, went off to do Y. M. C. A. work at a training camp. He was childless, had saved money, and he had the restlessness of forty years. He had twinges of the intense Americanism of those conscious of German ancestry; also he was sagacious enough to consider that the wholesome life of Camp Dix would be an admirable holiday from the book business. He never came back to Erskine's: one of his buddies in the Y. M. C. A. canteen later offered him a partnership in the paper-box business.

Herman's Y. M. C. A. uniform with its handsome red triangles gave Hazel an irritating advantage over Lucille, who sometimes imagined that all the convulsions of the universe were planned specially for her own annoyance. She thought she had caught up with her sister by the move to the West Side, but now Hazel was continually alluding "to doing one's bit." Poor old Mrs. Geschwindt had her trials, too. She had supposed that now Gladys was near-by she would have consolation in her grandchild, but Gladys also was infected with patriotism. The old lady was unmistakably Teuton in garb and feature, so much so that when the pair walked together in Riverside Park, other urchins taunted. "Yay Gladys, your grannie's a Hun," screeched one young imp. Perhaps no history of the War has ever justly described how a composite nation was bedevilled by these intestine pangs. Gladys, with the cruelty of childhood, mocked the German nursery rhymes her grandmother tried to tell her. Mrs. Geschwindt sometimes groped her way along the paths of Riverside blinded with tears. Stony and angular were those tall streets, uncomfortable to one brought up in a softer, more genial earth. She felt sometimes as if she had no home anywhere: not a good way for an old lady to feel. Hazel, enjoying herself hugely at Red Cross bazaars and sewing circles, obviously regarded her mother as something to be apologized for. Lucille seemed to find her apartment and Gladys a full-time job. Only Richard, when he was at home, seemed aware of Mrs. Geschwindt's misery. Sometimes he was able to hunt out a movie that had nothing to do with Preparedness and take her to see it. Even there someone would usually come out on the stage and talk for a long two minutes about Liberty Bonds.

Herman's departure, and other shifts, meant changes at the office. Gene Vogelsang went back to cover the Coast. "Just my luck," he remarked to Richard. "You know I tried, two or three years ago, to get Sam to give me the Coast again. I had a lot of good friends out there—and say, a traveller has no idea what hospitality is until he hits that country. I don't know what it is, life feels different out there. More sense of fun. I tried to convince Sam that our connections in California really needed building up. No, he said he wanted me in the East. So I look through the little red notebook, all those nice names and numbers. No use any more, I say to myself, and throw it away. Now I'm going out again—I wish I had it. It'd save me a lot of time."

Richard said nothing of his own transfer. He was to sell Boston now, which meant good-bye to Detroit.

⁂ ⁂

There was a queer tension in the air as he came to Detroit for that last visit. We have forgotten now that dangerous terrifying energy with which a nation, after long delay, groomed itself for war. The automotive city, though the Chamber of Commerce had not yet invented for itself the phrase Dynamic Detroit, hummed in the ecstasies of production. In those days even the book business was lively. Richard had grown to know and love the city: when he registered at the hotel and looked out over Grand Circus Park, he remembered the streets like old friends. There was Cadillac Square and Woodward Avenue, Washington Boulevard and the street mysteriously named John R.—He was in that deliciously dangerous state of mind when one says to himself, This is going to be good-bye. This is the end.

He finished his work in the afternoon; he was to take the midnight sleeper. He invited Bessie Beaton and Minnie to dine with him at the hotel. It was a warm evening. "Let's eat up in the room where we can be comfortable," he said. "Is Daisy Erskine anywhere round?" asked Bessie ironically. "And I'm going to ask Jock Edwards, the buyer at Griswold's, to come too," said Richard.

"I've got a better idea," said Minnie. "You said you've never taken the ferry over to Windsor. Let's do that. You ought to set foot on Canadian soil while you have a chance."

There had been a parade that afternoon, which they watched from the windows of Hack's Store. Old Mr. Hack was in a ferment of exaltation: he had declared a half holiday in the store and turned his daily advertisement into a personally signed essay on Showing Your Colors. (5,000 new flags had just arrived from the bunting factory.) He was willing to allow any number of employees to enlist, and secretly determined that he would not even grudge a bronze tablet for those who might not come back. Bessie Beaton wept with excitement as the ranks marched by. Even the cool Minnie showed curious tremors of emotion. Richard was intoxicated by the repetition of martial tunes, the slow swaying rhythm of feet. He felt a secret envy of the marchers. To be one of that great brown tide, flowing endlessly downward, all the pitiful decisions of every day swallowed up in one great unanimous obedience. He read Mr. Hack's announcement to the staff, posted up in the store, encouraging them for service. "Gee, that's pretty fine," he said. Then Minnie startled him. "Bunk!" she said. "He's pretty safe, isn't he? Not much chance of submarines getting into the Detroit River."

They picked up Jock and crossed over to Windsor. They wandered about that agreeable town and found a pleasant café for dinner. "This is *your* evening," they told Richard; "we'll do whatever you suggest." He was deeply touched at their evident reluctance to have him go. "I don't care who Sam sends, I shan't give him any 50's," said Bessie. "Fifties!" cried Jock. "Dick never got any orders like that out of me. It must be his romantic eye, Bessie." "Never mind what it is," she said.

"By the way," Richard remarked, "I've got a book for you up at the hotel, Bessie. Stop there on the way back, and I'll give it to you. Not business, this is a present."

"I was hoping it would be a pair of garters," she said.

"I'm glad you don't like leaving us," said Minnie. "But gosh, how I envy you. New York, Boston, Philly—that sounds to me like the real thing. I'm going to pull my freight out of here as soon as I get a chance." She was not very talkative that evening, but Richard thought he had never seen her so alluring. She wore a muslin dress with many tiers of flounces and a big straw hat. As the hour of departure came nearer, he grew depressed. How marvellous to be with people who understood him so well; why could not all life be like this?

"You know," he said, as they went back to the ferry, "this has been my first trip abroad."

On the ferry, Bessie decided she was tired. "Do you mind if I don't come back to the hotel?" she said. "Jock will see me home. I hate saying good-byes anyhow. Minnie, you go along and get the book for me."

Richard never knew exactly how it happened. She was upstairs in his room, where his bag was already packed for the train.

"How much time have you?" she asked. "You mustn't be late."

"Listen," he said abruptly. "Never mind about time. I'm something besides a bookseller. I'm also a man."

His arms were round her, as he had sometimes imagined them.

"Does that light turn out?" she said presently.

"Let's try it and see."

"My darling, I did want you, just for once, to have whatever you wished." This was whispered very low, but then followed by her characteristic laughter. "I thought you ought to have a souvenir of your trip abroad."

Minnie would not let him miss his train. She saw him safely to the station. Her last words were: "I hope you won't have as good a time in Boston as you did in Detroit."

⁂ ⁂

Boston was indeed rather different. But in the ardors of a new itinerary he had little chance to meditate until an autumn day when he found himself at the old Parker House over Sunday. He went out for a stroll, occasionally murmuring the word *Paakeh* to himself, trying to pronounce it in its own way. He discovered the Public Gardens.

No social memorandum of Boston is complete without a note on the Public Gardens on a Sunday morning. The serenity of those clean lawns and fine old trees is delicious. Not there will you find notices in four languages. Observe the swan-boats gently pedalled by elderly men and bearing gravely elated passengers. Perhaps these craft are symbolic of the traditional New England literature? The great books of Massachusetts were swan-boats pedalled by elderly men.

Richard carefully read the General Rules of the City of Boston Park Department:

> No person shall annoy another; or speak in a loud tone; or sing; or whistle; or utter any profane, threatening, abusive, or indecent language, or loud outcry; or canvass; or solicit any subscription or contribution; or play any game of chance; or sit, stand or lie on a balustrade, wall, or fence; or stand or lie on a seat; or sleep; or throw a stone or other thing; or drink, or be under the influence of intoxicating liquor; or, except in Franklin Field, preach, or pray aloud, or make any oration or harangue.

He had no particular desire to do any of these trespasses, though perhaps he was playing a game of chance unawares. He sat very still under a tree, for even the swan-boats were too distracting for what he needed to consider. There was no real future for him at Erskine's. That afternoon he wrote to Minnie. "I've decided to start in business on my own, the first of the year. Stationery novelties. Will begin with that desk-set idea. Would you come on to New York and help me with it?"

His mind went back to the last evening in Detroit. "Gosh, and I thought I was saying good-bye," he said to himself.

(*To be continued*)

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

On the Heights

THE ENGLISH POETIC MIND. By CHARLES WILLIAMS. New York: Oxford University Press. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE MCLEAN HARPER

WE have in this book a comparison of what the author regards as the highest peaks in the poetry of Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth. Sublimity, altitude, communion with the stars are to be found equally on the summits of the Matterhorn, the Jungfrau, and Mont Blanc; but fearful cold and danger are also there. So the passages which Mr. Williams repeats again and again from these poets, whom he unquestioningly and rightly assumes to be vastly superior to all others in the range of English literature, are both beautiful and awful. The title of the book is therefore misleading. It might better have been "The Realization of Infinity by the Greatest English Poets."

The formula which Mr. Williams uses to estimate the height of his peaks is "Solitude, change, and action." He does not clearly explain why he has chosen these conditions; seemingly he has arrived at them by intuition. The reader wonders whether there may not be other standards of poetic greatness: for example, the power to awaken joy and hope, or the power to impart something quite contrary to solitude, namely a sense of community with man or nature or God. Yet it may be said that the more disquieting and unsatisfying this book is, the deeper it digs itself into the reader's consciousness. It prevents sleep and stills the sound of summer birds. Have our greatest poets experienced at their highest moments "a sense Deathlike, of treacherous desertion?" Is life, as seen from these altitudes, entirely tragic? There are other values in great poetry besides a willing acceptance of fate. Happily Mr. Williams is not snow-blinded by dwelling on the heights, and catches with evident enjoyment many a glimpse of sunny pastures below.

The bent of his mind, and therefore the reason for his insistence upon those terrifying moments, is shown by his strange choice of "Troilus and Cressida" as one of Shakespeare's grandest plays. Indeed, the whole chapter entitled The Cycle of Shakespeare, which is much the longest in his book, is rather wild and puzzling. One must be grateful, however, for the interesting and upsetting suggestion that the tragedy of "Hamlet" might be acted from Claudius's point of view, as Irving acted "The Merchant of Venice" from Shylock's. It is enough to make Goethe and Coleridge and a whole cemetery of critics turn in their graves.

Of the seven chapters in the book, A Note on Great Poetry, The Growth of a Poet's Mind (*viz.* Wordsworth's), The Cycle of Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, The Crisis in Lesser Poets, and Conclusion, that on Milton is almost entirely just and The Crisis in Lesser Poets almost entirely unjust. Though pungent and at times pleasantly simple, Mr. Williams's style is often inexcusably obscure.

George McLean Harper is Woodrow Wilson professor of literature at Princeton University and a writer and critic of note on literary subjects. He is specially known as an authority on Wordsworth.

The autographed MS. of Burns's song, "The Lass of Ballochmyle," has been sold for £400. At the same sale ninety letters of Sir Walter Scott went for £210.

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RUSSIA THEN AND NOW

The Village Commune

RURAL RUSSIA UNDER THE OLD RÉGIME. By GEROLD TANQUARY ROBINSON. New York: Longmans, Green & Company. 1932. $4.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER BALTZLY

THIS thoroughly conceived study of land and peasant in Russia up to the Great War serves as a preliminary to a future volume on the peasant world in the crises of 1917. Half of the volume traces the course of enserfment and "emancipation" prior to 1905; the second half analyzes the Revolution of that year and its results.

In a chapter devoted to the Emancipation Acts of 1861-66 Professor Robinson is more emphatic than previous Western writers, Wallace and Mavor, for example, in the conclusion that the Great Reform was ineffective and that the lot of the peasant was even worsened by it. "The scales were weighted against the peasant; he was coming forth from the Emancipation with limited rights and little land, but abundant obligations; and behind him was a history that showed him not always passive in his discontent."

Trotzky, in the first volume of his "History of the Russian Revolution," brings out the point that the proletarian activity of February, 1917, was not instigated directly by revolutionary parties but that, instead, the "leaders" were led by a mass movement more radical than they, with which they had to keep up. In much the same way, Professor Robinson insists, the party leaders and programs of 1905 were kept up to the pitch by a spontaneous peasant rising, and this direct action, he shows clearly, was not something unusual in peasant history but rather one more attempt in a long series on the part of the peasant to secure the one thing that mattered to him—the land, enough land. This and not political revolution was in his mind, and there is little evidence that revolutionary propaganda impelled him.

> The Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 were linked and bound together, rather than divided, by the decade which intervened; and for many of the peasants this intervening decade was a period of change so rapid and so profound as in itself to constitute a kind of revolution. In many thousands of communes, the relations of peasant with peasant were altered fundamentally, and the mark of this change was written upon the very face of nature: the old land relations were dissolving, the old scattered strips of plow land were being assembled into individual farms, and the countryside was beginning to lose that minutely patched and quilted aspect so unfamiliar to the American eye.

For generations Russian historians have debated the origin of the *mir*, or village commune, whether it possessed natural strength of its own and was a genuine peasant institution or was imposed by landowner and government to facilitate their own taxatory processes. No historian could be less dogmatic than Professor Robinson, and he makes no attempt to solve this problem. His interest, in any case, is in the fact of the central position of the commune in the life of the villager. It is clear, too, that 1905 marks a turning point in the attitude of bureaucracy and gentry towards the commune, which they always before had fostered, perhaps greatly strengthened, and through which alone they had in most cases dealt with the individual peasant. In the presence of a rising peasantry the powers that were sought a policy that would secure them against agrarian revolution. The problem was to inculcate the desire for individual prosperity—and consequently respect for private property—at the expense of communal equality. In the words of Stolypin, author of the Land Laws of 1906-11: "The government has placed its wager, not on the needy and the drunken, but on the sturdy and the strong—on the sturdy individual proprietor who is called upon to play a part in the reconstruction of our Czardom on strong monarchical foundations."

How clearly one sees in these fermentations of 1905-14 the struggle for and against the "elimination of the kulak." The stage is set for the battle between "rugged individualism" and the "proletarianization of the peasant."

Seldom does a scholar dig so deep, brood so intently over his material, or wait so patiently before publishing. Here is no rushing into print, but an unremitting effort to get at the truth itself. With all the mass of detail every item is relevant, and the volume as a whole is a magnificent illustration of concentration on essentials.

Alexander Baltzly is professor of history in New York University.

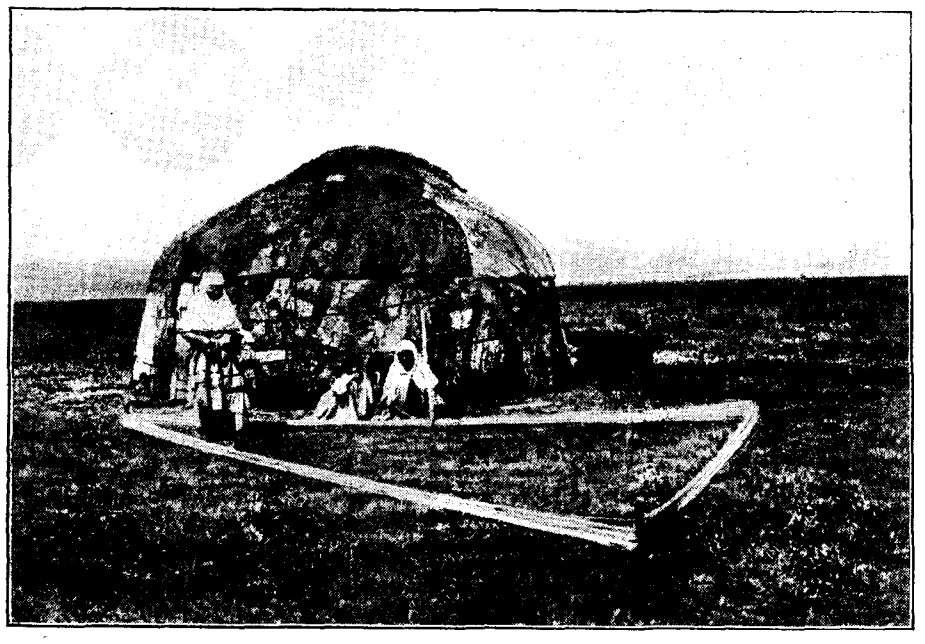
In Riga

THE CITY OF THE RED PLAGUE. By GEORGE POPOFF. New York: E. P. Dutton. 1932. $3.50.

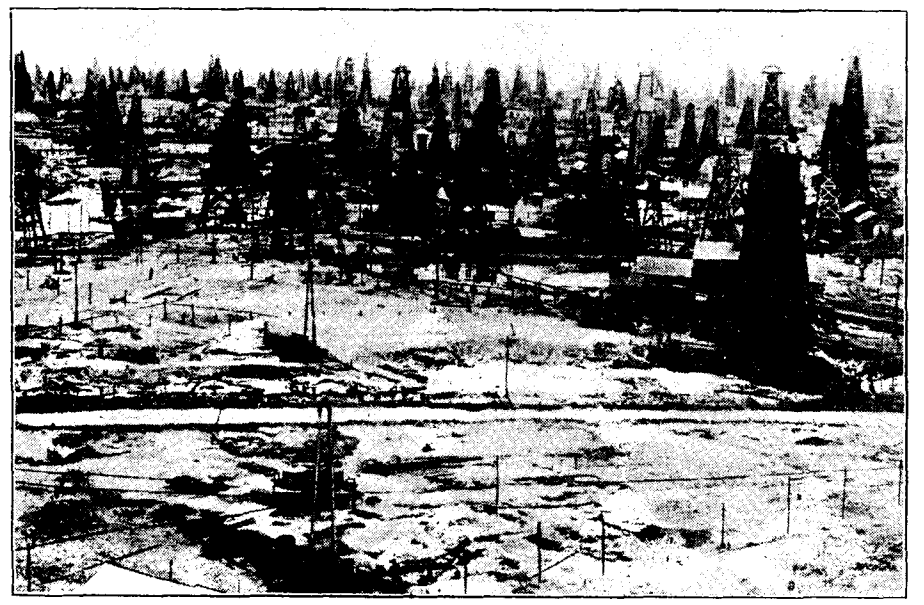
Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL

THE ancient town of Riga, on the Baltic, was one of old Russia's main gateways to the West, but like Reval, in the neighboring province of what is now Esthonia, it was Germanic in look and largely in atmosphere, and more like the other old Hansa towns than anything in "real" Russia.

It is this fact which gives peculiar interest and value to Mr. Popoff's book. Almost any foreigner writing about Soviet theory or practice finds his observations cluttered up with all sorts of more or less irrelevant notions and impressions of Russia itself. The woods are full of "buts." "But" this is the land of Tolstoy; but the theatres are so much more artistic than they are on Broadway; but here is one-seventh, or one-fifth, or whatever it is, of the earth's surface; but one hundred and fifty million Slavs can't be wrong, and so on.



THE RUSSIA OF THE PAST.
From "The Land Without Unemployment." (International)



THE RUSSIA OF THE PRESENT.
From "The Land Without Unemployment." (International)

In Riga, and what is now the little republic of Latvia, one is free of such preoccupations. In Riga, for all practical purposes, you are already in Western Europe. Riga, with its 200,000 persons, might almost be Lübeck or Hamburg, and as a field for Muscovite attack, it might almost have been Newark or Detroit. In short, what you have here is what roughly might happen in almost any Western industrial city which tomorrow should go Bolshevik.

Mr. Popoff further narrows his field by avoiding theory and discussion—although his personal point of view is frankly "White"—and sticking to things actually seen and heard by himself, or recorded in accessible sources.

Beginning with the proclamation that private property had been abolished and that all available supplies of food would be taken over for management and distribution by the new workers' government, and the comparatively mild pronouncements of old Peter Stutchka, head of the new Communistic republic, the pace quickens, through the fixing of "categories" of citizens, the attack on religion, the abolishing of money, until at last it gallops into the terror, with incessant house perquisitions, mass-executions, and, at the last gasp, innocent civilian "hostages" shot merely in reprisal for White successes on the nearby front.

Here, Mr. Popoff stops, leaving his record as it stands. Everything he describes, beginning with the serio-comic arrival of the somewhat embarrassed proletarian family to take over the flat in which he and his father and mother were living, down to the final storming by the Whites of the Lübeck bridge, he actually saw, heard, or is able to back up with records taken from Bolshevik sources, such, for example, as "Die Rote Fahne," the local Bolshevik newspaper published throughout the Red occupation.

The whole amounts to a sort of case-study, on a scale easily grasped and under conditions peculiarly free from distracting preoccupations, of the phenomena typical of the "militant period" of Communism, of the crushing of the "bourgeoisie" and the seizure by the "workers" of power.

It is true, as the Letts themselves proved when the Russian Bolsheviks were out of the way, that there were many dissatisfactions with the old Balt rule which Mr. Popoff doesn't go into here. It is true that he is a prejudiced witness and not one whose arguments could safely be swallowed whole did he happen to be arguing here. Happily, he isn't arguing, but acting as a reporter of events of which he himself was a part. Whatever you may think about communist theory—and of course a thorough-going Marxian might well grant the truth of everything that this anti-Bolshevik reports and hold that it was merely a regrettable part of the inevitable class war—his narrative represents an exciting and seemingly quite authentic turning into human tragedy of revolutionary phrases which are often glibly repeated without any real understanding of what they mean.

Jottings on Russia

A STREET IN MOSCOW. By ILYA EHRENBOURG. Translated from the Russian by Sonia Volochova. Covici-Friede. 1932. $2.50.

THIS book of Ehrenbourg's has the air of having been scribbled on scraps of paper in a Paris café table between drinks. The man is naturally clever, brilliant even; wholly without roots. Is he "Russian," "Jewish," "pro" or "anti" Soviet, or any other order?—he doesn't know himself. One is a writer, so one writes. Snatches of this and that—of Dostoievsky, of nostalgia for dear old sprawling Moscow, of "gypsy romances, cockroaches, and our famous national malady, hypochondria," of Tolstoyan "simplicity" and health, of vague decadence, rise and float momentarily in the febrile clatter of Montparnasse.

They are jotted down as they come, neatly juggled and brought together—for a novel, after all, has a certain framework or plan—round a shabby Moscow street, running from the Smolensky market down to the river. The street—"Protochny"—is a part of present-day Moscow. It might just as well, but for the crowding and the fighting for space and the occasional references to the "Gay Pay OO" or some other actuality, be a part of old Russia, or no Russia at all. None of its inhabitants, vividly as they are hit off, ever lived anywhere outside of novels or in the whirling thoughts of a professional scribbler trying to concentrate in a situation equivalent to that of a shipwrecked sailor writing a philosophy on what is left of a life-raft. What was real, in that old life, or is there such a thing as reality? The sharks are real, at any rate.

"A Street in Moscow" is "interesting" as are all of Ehrenbourg's stories. It is spattered with bits of authentic Russia, bits of irony and macabre humor, unexpected flashes, like that in which the little pack of hard-faced, homeless children, tramping toward the resort called Mineral Waters, are seen as "our own Russia, as young and as abandoned, as visionary and as embittered, without a corner of her own, with never a caress, with no one to look after her. Our own Russia—that strange child who has already experienced everything; she is striding along from Skuratov to Vypolkov, from Vypolkov to Mineral Waters, and from there to somewhere else still, still further and further, along a hot and forsaken road, in the midst of somebody else's ears of corn, in the midst of somebody else's riches . . . will she reach her goal, will she ever reach it?"

All this is there, and yet the whole has that "unimportance" which attaches to work done without conviction; work which resembles a clever artist's random exercises, absent-minded reproductions of patterns that once were alive, lines vaguely reaching toward something new, and nothing done because it had to be done that way, and no other.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Biography

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MARC ANTONY. By ARTHUR WEIGALL. Putnams. 1931. $5.

When a book is devoted to the "times of Marc Antony" it is obviously intended to be one of those popular exercises in whitewashing blackened reputations. Only to a determined apologist could the years dominated by Pompey and Cicero, Cæsar and Augustus be regarded as the "times of Marc Antony," and a determined apologist Mr. Weigall shows himself. Assiduous in collecting evidences of Antony's virtues, he spends as much labor less worthily in deprecating the importance of the other figures of the age that his chosen hero may appear more impressive by contrast. The result is a book without importance either historical or literary.

MACHETE. By CHARLES MERRIAM. Dallas, Texas: Southwest Press. 1932. $2.

The author of "Machete" went down to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, in Mexico, to visit a sugar plantation of which his brother was one of the owners. It was understood, apparently, that he was more or less to work for his keep, and with nothing more than a certain natural leaning toward medicine and a bit of sympathy and common sense, he presently found himself by way of being plantation physician to some two thousand native laborers. One success with a peon's infected foot led to other requests and even demands for his services, and always protesting that he wasn't a doctor, and to questions as to what was wrong with the patients he treated generally answering with a cheerful "Search me!" he nevertheless succeeded in curing all sorts of ailments, assisted native mothers in bringing their children into the world, and even practised minor surgery.

In the course of what seems to be several years of experience, he saw a lot of the close-to-the-ground Mexico which doesn't usually get into the articles written from the capital and the up-country cities, and he tells about his conversations and his little plantation adventures with sympathy and humor. There is a certain naivété about Mr. Merriam's narrative, a touch of the letters sometimes written home to smalltown newspapers, which may draw a sniff from some of the professional Mexicanophiles, but he really liked the simple folk he helped, the hot country got hold of him; his is an honest record, with more of Mexico in it than the book's rather crude get-up and its little snap-shot illustrations might lead one to think.

REBELS AND RENEGADES. By MAX NOMAD. Macmillan. 1932. $3.

This curious volume testifies to a praiseworthy amount of research and brings together a series of studies of the careers of leading revolutionaries. Malatesta, Briand, Scheidemann, MacDonald, Trotsky, Mussolini, Pilsudski, and Foster are the bedfellows whom the gentleman who masquerades under the name of "Max Nomad" has brought between his covers—bedfellows strangely enough assorted as to size, direction, and purpose.

Which are "rebels" and which are "renegades" the author neither makes too obvious nor attempts to conceal. His sympathies are quite plainly with the radical reformers of mankind, and he can hardly refrain from considering Briand and MacDonald among the renegades. But he by no means loses his critical sense in dealing with those who are not among the apostates. Sharply and clearly, with the incisive polemical scalpel of the skilled political dissector, he bares the real motives and the irreconcilable individualism of those who remained "rebels." In fact, the intensity of the asocial qualities in each of the subjects seems to fix their position in the scale which runs from rebellion to renegadism.

Despite the author's sympathy with the apostles of discontent, there runs through the whole book a clarifying appreciation of the futility of asocial extremism. The great "rebels" are vastly more interested in their own conception of their own wrongs than in those of the "masses" on whose behalf they have appointed themselves to speak. The spirit of renunciation in the common cause is rare among them.

Drama

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER: The Maides Tragedy. Introduction by CHRISTOPHER MORLEY. Illustrations by FREDA BONE. New York: Cheshire House. 1932.

An excellently arranged and produced reprint, the chief interest in which is the series of illustrations by Freda Bone. These are wood engravings, printed direct from the blocks, and the type and pictures go well together.

Fiction

OUR STREET. By COMPTON MACKENZIE. Doubleday, Doran. 1932. $2.50.

This book purports to be reminiscences, which are probably semi-fictitious, but only semi-fictitious, of a little London street in the 'nineties—or, to be exact, between the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887, the occasion of the narrator's first visit, as a country boy, to his aunts in town, to the Diamond Jubilee ten years later. The street was in West Kensington, which was, like the waste land of Fulham to the West, economically middle-class, but, like the Kensington to which it clung, socially extremely genteel. In those days it was still a matter of course that all the residents of a short London street should have at least a bowing acquaintance, and the chapters of the book take them up house by house. The book does not rely so much as one might expect upon either making fun of the 'nineties or upon sentimentalizing over them; except for the artistic tastes of the esthetes who were reading Rossetti at the beginning of the decade and Wilde at the end, there is very little color of the time.

The book is in fact one of those pleasant, unimportant books which have always been fairly common in England and are almost never written here, in which the author simply introduces us to a number of agreeable people, who are amusing but not uproariously funny, who have lives but no melodramatic adventures, and leaves them to entertain us, as he might ask us to dinner and offer no more artificial entertainment than the society of his friends. And in its perfectly gentle way, the book succeeds, so well, in fact, that the lavender-and-old-lace love affair with which the threads are tied up at the end seems intrusively fictitious. "Our Street" will cause no excitement, but one might do much worse for easy-going summer reading. It is a book which one may pick up anywhere with enjoyment, and lay down anywhere without regret.

THE CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH. By CHARLES READE. Limited Editions Club. 1932.

Charles Reade's unforgettable and magnificent story of the Middle Ages, or Gerard and Margaret who brought Erasmus into the world—a tale which in the words of Hendrik van Loon who writes the introduction, "survives as a spiritual retreat for the weary"—this one of the Great Books has been printed for the subscribers to the Limited Editions Club. It is a thoroughly good and honest library edition of a classic, easy to handle and easy to read, a good piece of book making. The type is solid and pleasant, the paper soft and flexible, the binding easily opened and spread.

The illustrations by Lynd Ward, while more adequate than some of his previous work, still show a strong Teutonic bias, and do not seem to me to be satisfactory pictures for either the cloister or the hearth. They are reproduced by photogravure.

Miscellaneous

GUTENBERG AND THE BOOK OF BOOKS. By HENRY LEWIS JOHNSON. New York: William Edwin Rudge. 1932. $15.

It is most unfortunate that this sumptuous publication typifies the worst faults of our American writing on typographical matters. It is extremely well produced: paper, binding, etc., are all that could be asked for, while the "critical" text is inadequate, inaccurate, and sentimental. In Mr. Johnson's "Gutenberg" there is a most lamentable absence of scholarly consideration of the subject, while the historical account does not bear evidence of an acquaintance with the researches of the past generation. It is most unfortunate indeed that so much work and expense has been put into a book which cannot be relied upon: errors in proofreading, and some reproductions which are more than suspect, cannot be excused.

But if the historical and biographical material is almost worthless, there is yet an important portion of the book which will make it of great usefulness. This is the census of known copies in existence. While not a strictly bibliographical list, it is yet sufficiently full and explicit for general use, and with the reproduction of a page of the Bible, this list was worth printing. The whereabouts of one copy of the Bible, which has hitherto been something of a mystery, is given—the paper copy belonging to John H. Scheide, Esq., of Titusville, Pennsylvania—and it will not be generally realized that the Pierpont Morgan Library possesses one complete book on paper, a nearly complete set on vellum, and another paper set lacking only about 10 per cent of the leaves.

There is a good reproduction of a leaf from the Bible (together with a duplicate for framing), and a page from a German MS. of the XVth Century.

BURNED BOOKS: NEGLECTED CHAPTERS IN BRITISH HISTORY AND LITERATURE. By CHARLES R. GILLETTE. Columbia University Press. 2 vols. 1932. $10.

No one cares today what a theologian writes: but it is easy to picture the New England Watch and Ward Society publicly burning "Lady Chatterley's Lover" at Marrymount in Walloston, or a mixed throng of the D. A. R. and Retired Rear Admirals holding an *auto da fé* at Harpers Ferry over the Socialist and Communist platforms. The spirit of intolerance and suppression is probably as strong as ever in the world, but it takes new and subtler forms.

It is therefore necessary for a liberally minded person to be familiar with the history of the freedom of the press, and Mr. Gillette, Librarian Emeritus of Union Theological Seminary, has done a useful piece of work in gathering information of the attempts under English rulers from Edward I. to Victoria to suppress completely certain books which were thought to be subversive to Church and State. That such attempts could hardly be really as effective as the guardians of church and state hoped, is obvious, because once type is set up, the chances of an impression from it surviving are pretty good. The futility, the absurdity, and the ridiculousness of censorship is evident.

Mr. Gillette has done his work well, and if the book lacks something in spontaneity, it makes up for it in careful scholarship. It is a necessary reference work in the history of books and literature, and has a chronological list and an index.

CALIFORNIA'S MEDICAL STORY. By HENRY HARRIS, M.D. San Francisco: Stacey. 1932.

A good, sound piece of book making by the Grabhorns of San Francisco. In about 400 pages the history of medicine of California is told by Dr. Harris. The numerous illustrations are a disappointment, being too weak and gray in color.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMPANY OF AMATEUR BREWERS. Brattleboro, Vermont, 1932.

A manual of recipes and instructions for the brewing of better-than-average home brew. The usual home brew is pretty ordinary, but a careful reading of this book will give the amateur brewer a good many ideas and suggestions for the improvement of his product. Membership in the Company of Amateur Brewers costs but $2, and the annual Proceedings is worth much more than the price—besides which the book is of interest as a piece of printing.

OUT OF DOORS. By *Paul B. Mann* and *George T. Hastings*. Holt.
JUDGE'S FOURTH CROSS WORD PUZZLE BOOK. Edited by the staff of *Judge*. Day.
NATURE IN DOWNLAND AND AN OLD THORN. By *W. H. Hudson*. Dutton. $1.75.
A SPORTSMAN'S SKETCHES. By *Ivan Turgeniev*. Dutton. $1.75.
THE COLLEGE LIBRARY BUILDING. By *James Thayer Gerould*. Scribners. $2.
THE ART OF THE POTTER. By *Harry Barnard*. Macmillan. $1.

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A French Publisher on Fiction

By BERNARD GRASSET

"TRUE presentiments," wrote Radiguet, "are formed in depths which our mind does not visit. Consequently they cause us to perform actions which we interpret quite wrongly." I think that this quotation from a boy of genius may throw valuable light on inspiration in the art of fiction, and in particular on the errors to which novelists are exposed when they collect, translate, and arrange their inspiration. Indeed, all inspiration, in my opinion, is like the presentiments of which Radiguet speaks: all inspiration is formed in depths which the mind does not visit, and presenting itself to the creative artist mixed with the passions which control him, it guards its secret against him more rigorously than against anyone else.

These lines will no doubt offend those who pretend to have discovered, some thirty years ago, the mechanism of the novel, and the means of using their characters to achieve ends which they consciously aim at. I am here speaking of the school (for these "mechanics of the novel" have become a school) which not long ago Albert Thibaudet christened so humorously. I have elsewhere cited the interview in which one of these schoolmasters was pleased to make fiction resemble history, and announced that he adopted the methods of observation of the historian. I have likewise attacked this disregard of inspiration, which, in spite of any opinion the vulgar have in the matter, cannot be replaced by observation. Today I should like to go farther, and setting aside those deformations of the form of which Balzac is an instance, to make certain reflections upon inspiration in fiction which were suggested to me by the latest book by François Mauriac, and by the commentaries to which it gave rise.

That I wish to place the name of François Mauriac at the very beginning of these columns is, I think, enough to show that I intend to speak at present only of true novelists; by that I mean those who are led to write only by their need to release an inspiration. As for the others, let them go on, each in his own way, pursuing their gainful occupations; let them enjoy for a few years the favor of a skilfully managed public; let them even astonish their fellow manufacturers with their skill; they are no concern of mine. A number of these "mechanics of the novel," who are still alive, are already forgotten by the children of those to whom they were indebted for an inexplicable notoriety. I was told recently that one of them was on the point of bringing an action against his publisher, because his books had preceded himself in oblivion. He may possibly be more kindly disposed toward my brother publisher after having read me. But as my object is after all not to pacify him, I shall come without more digressions to what I have to say.

Those living beings who are the characters begotten by true novelists, those events which bruise them and which confuse them in our mind with historical persons, so that we even wish to see the places where they occurred, do not owe their reality to any imitation of the real, no matter how skilful, but solely to the emotion of the writer. That, in my opinion, is the great truth about the novel: emotion alone gives it life, and not the reproduction, not even the servile reproduction, of the most moving reality. I know well enough that such statements will make me no friends among those who see in the novel the mere narration of incidents not included in history, and who limit themselves to setting down what is at their door, without even feeling the need to find an aim outside their habitual sphere; or of those travellers who seem to expect to find only in expatriation a novelty which they can in fact find nowhere but in themselves, a novelty which can be conveyed to us only by that individual manner of expressing one's self which we say is a gift. Expatriation, I believe, is of all words the one most opposed to the art of the novel. And by this word I mean not so much the writer's forsaking his familiar landscape as a kind of forsaking of himself, a vain search outside himself for inspiration. The novelist never goes away from himself.

Since I have been obliged to speak in passing of those travellers most of whom would have done better to confine themselves to relating their travels, since they have brought back nothing more than a series of pictures, I ought to defend myself in advance against those who may pretend that I deny everything that inspiration in fiction may owe to new horizons. Now, I mean to say only that no novel derives its value from scenes which the writer visited for the first time, from customs which were strange to him, or from ways of loving or hating which surprised him, but rather from the echoes which these new impressions awoke in his soul, or more exactly, to use Ibsen's happy phrase, from the "dæmons" which these new impressions released in him, and which dwelt in his mind long before he set out.

These "dæmons" of which Ibsen speaks, what are they but the multitude of contradictory emotions and desires which divide our soul, the contestants in that inner strife which is the whole concern of literature? But even though the word "dæmon" in literature has for the most part merely a symbolic sense—the writer voluntarily neglecting the characters of his dreams, either to strain toward the universal, as the moralists do, or to express himself at the risk of giving us a distorted picture of himself—the word "dæmon" has for the novelist its most real sense. I mean by that that novelists themselves assume the characters born of their emotions, as we are all compelled to do in dreams, and that their design is only to show others the reality of these characters as they have felt it themselves. And here I draw no distinction between the dreams whose images fill our sleep, and that voluntary surrender to our imagination which is the source of all inspiration, and which a great man has recently called the "waking dream." Accordingly, I believe that if I had to define the novel, I should be willing to say: "The art of giving life to the characters who represent in dreams the various parts of ourselves" —meaning by that to affirm once more that we can create only out of our own substance, and that in spite of appearances the observation of others counts for little in the creation of fiction.

If it be objected that a Balzac has given us under the form of fiction the most exact picture of his time, and that Eugénie Grandet or Père Goriot have for us the reality of beings who actually lived and whom the author could not have found in himself, I answer that Balzac would have been unable to give life to these characters if something in him had not shared their anxieties and their loves, and had not joined in their pursuits, before they appeared to him. Now that is exactly the mechanism of our dreams: the "Human Comedy" which is played in them is the drama of ourselves, and no character appears in them without being summoned by a desire in our soul. Of course, our own character does not appear in all our dreams. Of course, also, the moral censorship or the defense mechanism which we cannot escape even in sleep often prevents us from recognizing ourselves in the shape of some of these imaginary beings, or of perceiving the connections which unite them all to us. But these connections nevertheless exist, for we can dream of nothing but things which preoccupy us or of beings whose desires and emotions are our own, or are opposed to our own. It is no matter that the characters who throng our dreams may have the faces and the habits of real persons with whom we are well acquainted, since we have observed them in their actual life, and who bear a name we know. It is no matter that their desires, their vices, and their virtues may seem to have no connection with the emotions which move us, or that they may not dwell in the places where our own drama is played. The landscape in which they swim is, like themselves, summoned up by our emotion; and thus we may say that, like the dream-people, the dream-country, too, is a part of us.

Here I think it will be convenient to speak of the share which observation does have in the creation of fiction. The true novelist rather submits himself to this observation than directs it; it cannot, of course, take the place of the author's emotion, but it forms the basis of the infinite variety of the dramas into which his inner drama is transformed. Thus the greatest of the novelists were compelled, in order to purge themselves of their own drama, to give life to thousands of "dæmons" who possessed them. One need look no further, I believe, for the reasons for the sufferings of a Balzac, whose genius had taken for its province the struggles of a whole society. From what has just been said, what a valuable relationship appears between the inspiration of the novelist and those presentiments of which Radiguet speaks, which are formed in depths which our mind does not visit—a relationship which the genius of Ibsen obviously felt when he wrote: "To create is to set at liberty the dæmons who dwell in the secret cells of our minds." The "secret cells of our minds" are just those "depths" where our penetration cannot reach and where presentiments and inspiration alike are born. Hence, how can we help but confess that Ibsen's splendid definition gives us to understand that the artist will find it difficult, if not impossible, to interpret the complex sports of the dæmons to whom he submits himself?

To submit one's self: that is the phrase for the novel. No doubt, the novelist is obliged to set down and arrange his inspiration. No doubt, his intentions, his training, and his beliefs make their demands and sometimes put him in danger of twisting his spontaneous conceptions, or indeed of giving us a false interpretation of them. In this writers run a greater risk than those other artists who are called painters, for since the latter cannot use that tool of the reason, the word, they cannot interpret themselves, and set their intelligence the task only of arranging their inspirations. Nevertheless, in spite of the mistakes to which novelists are exposed when they interpret themselves, in spite of the deformations which they cause in the dæmons who dwell in their souls, deformations which come from a mysterious sense of shame or from a faith they have assumed (to which I should like to give the name of parasites), it is still possible to discover, running through the work of the greatest of them, that continuous line of inspiration which is the mark of sincerity in art, by dint of searching deeper than their conscience, in the secret cells of their mind.

But it is not to be supposed that the novelist will readily accept an interpretation of his work which does not tend toward the end he had in view, even if, or especially if, this interpretation, when made by a penetrating mind, strips naked the mysterious cord of his true personality.

Bernard Grasset, one of the most eminent of French publishers, has made already interesting contributions to criticism.

From the Air

AIR INDIEN. By PAUL MORAND. Paris: Bernard Grasset. 1932. 15 francs.

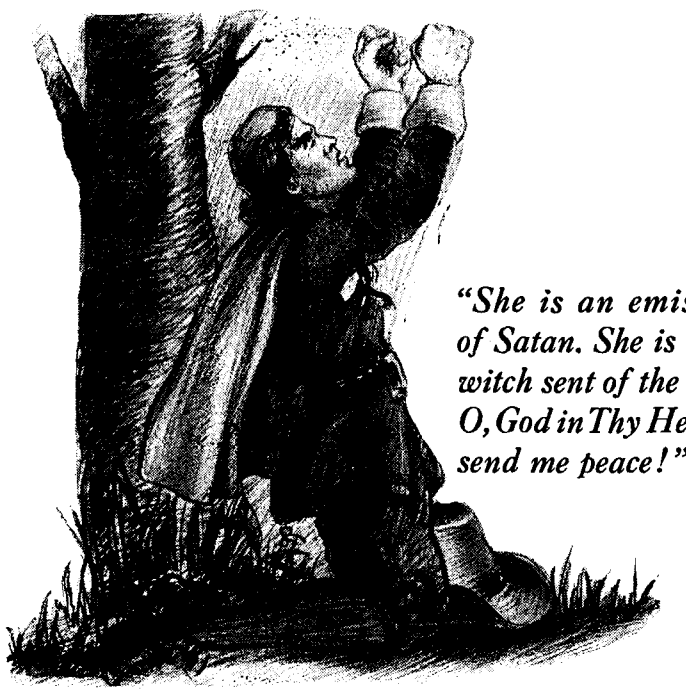
Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY

BOOKS of travel seem to be having an unusual vogue in France of late. The reason for this, perhaps, lies in the fact that "le grand tourisme" as the British, the American, and the German have long practised it, was an unknown quantity to the French until the war. Today, while travelling for travelling's sake can hardly be said to have established itself, the development of the French colonies and of international trade has fostered a revival of interest in foreign parts and foreign manners unfelt since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, heyday of the explorer and his travel journals.

Among the modern authors reviving this tradition one of the most popular is Paul Morand. His book on New York sold over a quarter of a million copies in the French edition alone, and his accounts of African, Caribbean, and Far Eastern travels have been almost as widely read. Though neither in matter nor style of any extraordinary importance to the specialist in such things, all are cleverly calculated to please the average sophisticated reader, and are admirably suited to serve as unofficial guidebooks to the modern traveller.

Assuredly as successful and considerably more novel in subject is the latest addition to this series. "Air Indien" is the account of Morand's trip, mostly by air, from Buenos Aires to New Orleans along the west coast of South America. Rushing over deserts and mountains at a speed of over two miles a minute, the author nevertheless contrives to seize and set down something of the essential quality of the country, the people, and their mysterious past. The remains, little known but still well preserved, of the once vast and flourishing empire of the Incas are admirably described, though the author's viewpoint is that of the novelist in search of the picturesque rather than that of the trained observer or archæologist. Within these limits, it is an exceptionally brilliant picture, however, that he presents of these temples and cities of unknown date and origins. The hard, clear Andean landscapes seem pecularily suited to his brittle Gallic pen.

The narrative is spiced with anecdote and reference in a fashion unfortunately rare in Anglo-Saxon literature of this type. A particular charm clings to Morand's imaginative description of the American tombs of three figures of perennial fame in French memories—those of Manon Lescaut, La Perichole, and Ramuntcho. Similarly the amusing discussion of what America might have been like had the Latin race settled in the northern half of our hemisphere and the Anglo-Saxon ones in South America lends satiric point to many of the scenes later described. In all, "Air Indien" is a personally conducted tour under the best auspices of a region neglected and remote but more than usually fascinating. Whether the book is to be translated into English or not I do not know.



"She is an emissary of Satan. She is but a witch sent of the devil. O, God in Thy Heaven, send me peace!"

THERE was Anne. And there was John, her husband, who loved her dearly, although he had sinned against her. And there was Eleazar, John's brother, whose frustrated lust for Anne developed into what he believed to be a holy and righteous wrath at the couple's fleshly happiness.

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Points of View

The Bookbuyer Again

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir:

A campaign for better and cheaper books, such as the *Saturday Review* has been waging for the last month or more in its editorial column, is noble in purpose. But the successive proposals could they be tried as experiments, would not be very far-reaching in effect, so persistently do they ignore the fact that publishing, like every other form of manufacture, is forced to flounder in a top-heavy wasteful system of distribution where the cost of marketing a product is out of all proportion to the cost of its manufacture. The publisher cannot be liberated until everyone else is. A book that sells for $2.50 costs fifty cents to make—twenty per cent of its selling price. The author, on the average, gets 10 per cent. The remaining seventy per cent goes into promotion selling and management with their attendant "overhead" expenses. If a publisher could find a way to cut that seventy per cent by a half or even a third, he would be retained as a dictator by manufacturers of shoes and ships and sealing wax. No doubt there are other wastes and extravagances in publishing. Eliminate them all and you would not affect the major waste which makes the cost of getting a book to the ultimate consumer (excluding the author's royalty) more than four times the cost of making it. At that the retail book seller complains that he can't make a living even on the basis of a forty per cent discount, and no publisher gets back more than production costs on more than a fraction of his list.

Why talk of more persistent advertising or more conscientious advertising copy when the cost of advertising is itself one of our greatest economic wastes? The excessively high cost, in a country three thousand miles wide, of advertising any article widely enough to effect consumption, makes it impossible to advertise any book except one that has already made a hit and gotten off to a flying start. Any publisher would bankrupt himself within a year if he persistently advertised anything but his successes. Advertising may roll up sales for a book that has already begun to roll them up of its own accord. The best seller can be made to sell better. But has there ever been an instance of persistent advertising turning any book that was a popular failure into a popular success? The only books that can pay for the cost of advertising them are those that need it least.

Even $2.50 for an ephemeral book is not a prohibitive price to thousands of people who think nothing of paying $1.25 twice in an evening for taxis to and from a dinner party, gulp cocktails on the way at seventy-five cents or one dollar each, pay $2.50 for an extra necktie or a pair of gloves, and congratulate themselves on getting orchestra seats for a "good show" at $3.00 each. But they boggle at buying a new book and borrow it if they can; as for a volume at $3.50 or $5.00 that is always out of the question. However, suppose that they did put three hundred to five hundred dollars a year into book buying which they could easily afford to do. Within a few years they could no longer afford living quarters large enough to keep the books they had bought (even if they cut off their telephone and went into seclusion in order to find time to read them). The more books of permanent value they had acquired, the less rubbish they would be able to throw out, the sooner every inch of spare wall space would be filled and their careers as book buyers automatically ended. As to our intellectual classes for whom reading is a necessity rather than a pastime, under our present régime their prevailing incomes are so low that more than a few books a year at any price are beyond their means. And until our present régime is fundamentally changed they will have to go on borrowing rather than buying.

In our present state of industrialism the only means of reducing unit cost is by mass production. And mass production is economically impossible without the assurance of mass acceptance. How many articles of mass consumption are there which are not meritricious, adulterated, bloated with false claims, cheapened not only in price but in real value? Why should publishers be expected to create a Utopia of their own in which they are able to distribute better books cheaply, when it is almost impossible to distribute better radio programs, better plays, better movies, better clothing, better housing, that enough people could afford to pay for even if they had the taste to want the better thing?

The problem of publishing better and cheaper books is the same as the problem of distributing anything else that is better and cheaper. It is blocked by the failure of our educational system to make an effective dent in the congenitally low level of American taste, by our current system of manufacture and distribution which can make cheap only what is not worth keeping, by the economic insecurity, low incomes, lack of leisure, and cramped housing of all but a fraction of our population. Better books will be sold widely enough to make it possible to distribute them cheaply when American education educates enough Americans, higher wages are paid for socially useful services, and widespread economic security and the end of speculative housing give every family space to accumulate a library and the time in which to read it—in short, not until there has been something of a cultural, economic, and social revolution in the country.

Your "Bookbuyer's Argument" that publishers should distinguish between ephemeral and permanent literary value by differences in paper, binding, and price would turn publishing into an uproarious farce-comedy. Visualize the consequences. Imagine Alfred Harcourt, Alfred Knopf, Ben Huebsch, or T. R. Smith, calling in an unpublished author and remarking: "My dear Mr. Pendiddle, I shall be delighted to publish your manuscript. Of course, it is purely ephemeral in value. It is not for all time, not even for the next decade. But you will be pleased to know that I intend to advertise the fact widely and give you a royalty of ten cents rather than twenty-five cents a copy. We hope by assuring the public that your work has a merely temporary value to give it a temporary circulation." Can anyone suppose that even an aspirant would take that sort of thing lying down? Pendiddle would very naturally rush his MS. to the next house with a note: "This was rated as ephemeral by X. You can have it if you will give it a permanent rating." Authors would be swapped like horses merely on the prospect of re-rating the chances of their circulation. Weekly tips, like racing "dope sheets," would be a necessary adjunct to every weekly review of books. "Pendiddle, a two-year-old of Harcourt's string, rated as an Ephemeral, has just been taken over by Viking as a Permanent. Odds of seven to four offered against more than a three year run." Or "Kleinmacher, heretofore one of Knopf's Permanent outfit, has been dropped by that house. Taken on by Harcourt as an Ephemeral. Odds six to four offered that his sales go up." Or there might be annual graduation exercises when the ephemerals graduated into the permanent class and received degrees from Scribner's, Macmillan or Houghton Mifflin.

There may be too much speculation in the business of publishing, but it can be no more wasteful than the kind of speculation involved in anticipating the judgment of posterity. French and English academies have been attempting to do that in the name of literature for more than a century. The rate of survival among these "immortals" has never been high. Publishing houses will not necessarily publish better books because they adopt the pretensions of academies of letters. Publishers as prophets would not necessarily be more trustworthy than publishers out for profits.

Literary values are too much a matter of retrospect, too fluctuating even when established, to serve as a guide for current reading. Why is it necessary for a reader to get so many intimations of literary immortality in the books he buys? Why shouldn't we consume books as we do food, for their immediate nourishment? Even a book of supposedly temporary value doesn't cost much more than a good meal. In a time of crises of every sort, a book that stimulates our immediate judgments can be well worth the price, even though it have no right to a permanent place on library shelves. A banker, an investor in foreign securities, a business man with foreign interests, or perhaps even a member of a Senate foreign affairs committee should be far more willing to pay $6 to compare Simond's "Can Europe Keep the Peace?" with Salter's "Recovery," though both be "dated" three years from now, than part with $3 for a definite judgment of Donne which may become a permanent reference work. Books are also meant to live by, and they can do that even though they do not live on themselves. It might be better if we absorbed more books and kept fewer of them. What does the permanent value of Mabel Dodge's "Lorenzo in Taos" matter if it sends someone back to re-reading Lawrence with a fresh point of view? If a reader can make use of a book even temporarily it can have a permanent, in the sense of formative, influence on him long after the book itself may be obsolete. Why should a reader be intimidated by either the prospects of permanence or obsolence of a book that is able to interest him? The importance of a book is its relevance to him, to his needs, superficial or profound, his emotional or intellectual curiosity at a given moment, not the place of the book in a history of literature. It is just as well to remember that the popular second-rate book often pays the freight of bringing modern literature safely into port; the excess profits of many best sellers enabled a good many publishers to back certain authors through several unprofitable books until they found their public or even to grub-stake them if they couldn't afford to wait for royalties.

Literature usually makes its appearance incognito and is produced most freely, not when it is planned according to a fixed set of obvious and external values, but as a part of a prodigious activity in mere writing by everyone who can and will. And a ready market encourages that activity more effectively than any other stimulus. The so-called era of overproduction in the American publishing business for the past fifteen years or so was valuable because it made it easier for men and women who wanted to write to get their work printed, to develop in contact with whatever public they could attract, instead of waiting to be evaluated in advance and in the interim wasting their energies in irrevelant hack work. The range of experiment encouraged, the varieties of literary expression achieved, the valid and vital points of view expressed, the general level of workmanship, and the rate at which writers of talent and promise emerged has certainly never been higher. (Whether they were able to sustain their promise is another matter.) There are times when, in comparison with what other manufacturers and merchants accomplished during a period of inflation, American publishers as a group seem to deserve, if not a monument, at least a medal. The only probable result of restricting their output, if the depression continues much longer, will be that they will try to pick the sure and safe book or obviously literary ones and become timid about taking risks or encouraging novelty, experiment, and new talent in general. Whether or not they pretend to do this in the interest of permanent literary values is not very important. The chances are that by publishing less freely they will in the long run publish fewer books worth being eventually ranked as literature.

New York City. LEE SIMONSON.

MR. JOHN J. HESSIAN, Treasurer of the publishing house of Doubleday, Doran & Company, was recently given a dinner by his fellow-workers to celebrate the 25th anniversary of his connection with the company. On this occasion Mr. Ogden Nash, himself a Doubleday alumnus, read the following:—

A POEM IN PRAISE OF
PRACTICALLY JOHN J. HESSIAN

I rise to say that I consider it a pity
That the pleasure of working with John Hessian should be confined to Garden City
Here the whole country stands tottering on the brink
And nobody gets the benefit of J. J. except Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.
In these awfully, extremely, frightfully troubled days
I think that rather selfish of the Doubledays
And I say without hesitation
That it is their duty to share him with the nation
Right here and now we should start a manœuver
To do away with Mr. Roosevelt and do away with Mr. Hoover.
The country gave them their chance
And what did the country get out of it?—
A kick in the pants.
I arise now, July 7th, 1932 Anno Domini,
And give you the name of the ideal nominee,
And I call on you to end the depression
Under President John J. Hessian.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed for the summer to MRS. BECKER, 2 Bramerton Street, Chelsea S.W. 3, London, England. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries received cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

E. S. J., Burbank, Cal., wants a list of books on caricature; history, criticism and so on. It is desired to tie it up with literature, satire, and parody through books or essays on humor.

BOHUN LYNCH'S "History of Caricature" (Little, Brown) came out in this country in 1927, and though it is out of print, I begin with it because it is well worth looking for; it goes from the early Egyptians to the recent past, is freely and properly illustrated and gives the subject, as truly it should, a treatment both urbane and scholarly. C. R. Ashbee's "Caricature" (Scribner) is another large and carefully illustrated survey; it is comprehensive in its scope though stronger on the historical side than as contemporary criticism.

The determined caricature collector cannot depend upon books alone, in or out of print; he scans catalogues and watches sales; bins of back-numbers and such possibilities as the *boîtes* along the parapet of the Seine's left bank, delight him. But for this department's purposes, a few easily accessible volumes must suffice; for instance, the two-volume "Abraham Lincoln" (*Review of Reviews*) in which Albert Shaw collected evidence as to the effect of Lincoln upon the political and partisan feelings of his country, as these took shape in pictures more or less grotesque. Rollin Kirby's "Highlights" (Payson) should be in any collection like this; it makes a cartoon history of the nineteen-twenties; this may be "only yesterday," but the cartoons will be historical documents before we know where we are. Here is David Low's "Lions and Lambs" (Harcourt, Brace), portraits of personages in English politics and literature, by the most popular caricaturist in England —for Low is the jolly type of draughtsman, given to the curves that are seldom so maleficent to the sitter as angles—unless, of course, the picture is of a lady who intends some day to reduce. Low made the portrait of the author in Ralph Straus's extravaganza, "A Whip for the Woman" (Farrar & Rinehart)—a book that belongs on this list, for it combines burlesque, parody, and pure slap-stick in a threefold exposure of how a best-seller comes to be. It may be remembered by those who remember E. H. Benson's delicious "Lucia in London" (Doubleday, Doran), that Queen Lucia was quite sure she had really "arrived" when she figured in an exhibition of caricatures, her behavior on that occasion being a model for others in like case. Indeed, to be caricatured by Low is to be in the public eye—by Beerbohm, in English history. Art Young's "On My Way" (Liveright) is more than cartoons, though there are many of these; here are notes and comments, flashes of life, and guesses at truth that, taken together, make almost an autobiography. I think it would not call for much stretching of the definition to include his "Trees at Night" (Liveright) among caricatures, human at that; they have the human quality that plucks at its own roots.

There is all the difference of their times between the warm-hearted jocosity of "The Gay Nineties" (Doubleday, Doran), R. V. Culter's pictures of remembered society, and the sharp sophistication of "Peter Arno's Hullabaloo" (Liveright), or the mordant ridicule of Helen Hokison's "So You're Going to Buy a Book" (Minton, Balch). One chuckles steadily at Culter's scenes because the hats and the habits are incongruous, funny in themselves; one is shaken into sudden peals of laughter because Mr. Arno or Miss Hokison finds something unbearably funny. Just where Clarence Day comes in, as a caricaturist or as a philosopher, I never tried to determine, preferring simple enjoyment of books like "Thoughts without Words" (Knopf), where the drawings have rather the better of it, those embryonic creatures in whom ideas take tentative human shape. As for O. Soglow's "Pretty Pictures" (Farrar & Rinehart), most of them do as well for one decade as another; the individuality of his style belongs to our very day, but what he satirizes has been going on for some time and is likely to keep on going. For pure caricature, without political or social purpose, depending upon sympathetic exaggeration, the "Negro Drawings" of Covarrubias (Knopf) are remarkable examples of what can be done in line, tone, and color.

The favorite figures of the comic strips seldom have satiric intent; there seems no particular reason why Andy Gump should have no lower jaw; I never heard the theory put forward that he had talked it off. Percy Crosby's sententious Skippy got into book form before reaching the movies, and so did Frank King's "Gasoline Alley." Most of the others must depend upon the precarious immortality of the pulps. In these railway compilations, for instance, I was lately able to lay in a quarter's worth of Moon Mullins.

Gilbert Seldes was, so far as I can discover, the first to give proper critical attention to the comic strip; it was in his "The Seven Lively Arts" (Harper), a work to which I find myself often turning on someone's behalf and always to my own enjoyment. The tying-in with parody may be accomplished with the aid of "A Survey of Burlesque and Parody in English," by George Kitchin (Oliver), an English publication on sale in this country. It is the kind of book some people will say puts in too much and others quarrel with because it does not put in enough; which means that if it sets out to go, as it does, from Chaucer to the present day, it will have to leave out something. One feature endearing it to me was that the author enjoyed himself in the process.

To round out the record, here are some manuals of cartoon-making, books for which I am often asked. "How to Draw Cartoons," by Clare Briggs (Harper), is still popular; he seems to have been able to show somebody how to draw his cartoons after he was dead. "How to Draw Funny Pictures," by E. C. Matthews (Drake); "Practical Graphic Figures," by E. G. Lutz (Scribner); and "Fun-Sketching," by W. R. Foster (Macmillan), are short-cuts useful for commercial or entertainment purposes.

LETTERS from Illinois, from Indiana, and from New York remind me that this is the season of the year when reading and study clubs making programs are trying to keep them not only level with the times but well ahead. For I am asked not only what books are out but what novels are promised that in my opinion will adorn such reading-lists. In other words, for which of the Fall's forthcoming novels would these correspondents be well-advised to save space? I am sometimes reminded when questions like this come in, of the nervous eye I have seen applied in moments of stress, not to the tape but into the very jaws of the ticker from which it issues. Somewhere within the mechanism of publishing offices certain novels are at this moment grinding toward the moment of issue; some will be ready for the reader by the time this gets into print; others may be looked for as far ahead as next November. That, for instance, is when Booth Tarkington's "Wanton Mally" (Doubleday, Doran) is due—it goes back to Charles Second's times, like "Monsieur Beaucaire." The right-away novels I would put on such a list are Vicki Baum's "Secret Sentence" (Doubleday, Doran); a vigorous horsey novel by M. J. Farrell, "Mad Puppetstown" (Farrar & Rinehart); G. B. Stern's "The Rueful Mating" (Knopf); Radclyffe Hall's "Master of the House," which now comes out with the Houghton Mifflin imprint and resembles her poignant "Adam's Breed" more than anything else she has written; "Robbers' Roost" (Harper), if you like Zane Grey as well as most people do; and a story by Harriet Henry called "The Rakish Halo" (Morrow), through which any young person will go like a forest fire, and from which a middle-aged one may get needed enlightenment and possible encouragement on the young. I should have been able to say something about Charles Morgan's "The Fountain" (Knopf) by this time, for it has been out long enough, but one good taste of its richness made me

(*Continued on next page*)

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• PERSONALS

WHEN will memories fade? "O never more, till my dissolving brain be powerless to evoke you out of air," M.d. Two.

RETURNED from assisting housework-farming southern France, healthy girl (27) seeks similar occupation here. Remuneration greeted gleefully, but gladly cooperate in return for congenial country living. Can operate typewriters and automobiles. XXVII, c/o *Saturday Review.*

COOL quiet room in private home (Beacon Hill, Port Washington, Long Island) is offered by the week for summer by impecunious writer. Use of private bathing beach. Ideal for rumination and other sedentary pastimes. Address RUSTIC, c/o *Saturday Review,* or phone Port Washington 2337.

PROFESSOR GRANT C. KNIGHT of University of Kentucky, if this should meet the eye of, will he please note that on p. 485 of his book "American Literature and Culture" he classifies as "essays" three volumes which are not essays at all. One is fiction, one is fable, one is poetry. Can Professor Knight give proof of having read any of these three volumes? If not, why comment on them? MR. GISSING.

EAST ANGLIA—For your vacation in England, meet me with small car, almost any pub in Upper Stour Valley. English village life there preserves unspoiled simplicity. Try Sudbury, Long Melford, Lavenham, Clare; these towns have hardly seen an American since the original gang pushed off in 17th century. If you want to avoid the Average American On Tour, this your hunch. Wise visitors to England provide themselves L. N. E. R. *Holiday Handbook,* which gives complete list of literary associations. SILLY SUFFOLK, c/o *Saturday Review.*

PLEASE tell me where to find Jonathan Swift's sermon On Sleeping in Church. Need it for my own congregation. YOUNG DOMINIE.

THIS ISSUE begins 9th year of the *Saturday Review of Literature.* Lonely subscriber will exchange toasts with any congenial abonnée. HULLO HANDSOME, c/o *Saturday Review.*

PRESTIGE PROMOTION—that's what they offered me, but it sounds like huey—what I want is publicity, merchandizing or political campaign job that gives opportunity for clear-cut imagination. Tomorrow is my birthday. Dark eyebrows, slightly sunburned from idleness. This is the season for ideas; I have them—*und wie!* Experienced in spirit, young in aspiration. WOMAN OF "THE WORLD." Phone GIbraltar 7-6094 (10 cent call).

I HAVE two beautiful golden brown Cocker Spaniel puppies for sale. They have fine pedigrees and are in excellent health. Howard Dunn, Lee, Mass.

IN the East 60's New York City an elegant house beautifully remodelled is available.

Ideal for art gallery Address Jesturn, Saturday Review of Literature.

SOUTHERNERS GONE NORTH—The Seashore Campgrounds, facing the blue Gulf of Mexico, have for sixty years stood as a light house of spiritual values. Its future now is greater than ever, but its quarter million dollar property is imperiled by a thirty thousand dollar debt. Material investments have failed, why not invest in projects interested in creating spiritual resources? Your inspiration and character came from the south—why not repay the debt? If you wish to help us—by establishing a memorial, an outright gift, or a friendly idea,—write James W. Sells, Seashore Assembly, Biloxi, Mississippi.

Can a woman's love be as great as this?

For years she concealed her love from the famous novelist who had given her the only moments of sheer ecstasy in her unhappy life. Then one day she wrote a letter to the man, who had forgotten her existence. In this novelette the great Austrian writer has written "a remarkable love story worked out to the point of perfection."—*N. Y. Herald Tribune.* "Consummate art."—Charles Hanson Towne, *N. Y. American.*

LETTER *from an* UNKNOWN WOMAN

by STEFAN ZWEIG $1.25

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The PHŒNIX NEST

A Retraction

The Phœnix Nest and the Publisher regret exceedingly that in the issue of June 25 there was erroneously printed an item in regard to the bankruptcy of the publishing house of Jonathan Cape and Robert Ballou. What happened was that the corporation, Jonathan Cape and Robert Ballou, Inc., went into an equity receivership. It was not intended to imply that Jonathan Cape or Robert Ballou individually went into bankruptcy, for such was not and is not the fact.

THE Autumn book catalogue of Brewer, Warren & Putnam is an innovation. Small, longitudinal, and compact, it is the shape and size of the cards in a standard card file. The titles are classified in three colors, white for fiction, green for non-fiction, yellow for juveniles. Each card is perforated and can be torn out, either to file or to return as an order or for further information. Each card, after details of format and price, bears a synopsis of the book's contents, the chief facts concerning the author, and a classification of the book's appeal. This new form of catalogue strikes us as eminently practical. Our only slight cavil is that, strangely enough, in listing "The Fun of It," Mrs. Putnam's name is set forth as *Earheart, Amelia,* with one *e* too many. . . .

It is rumored that one of the *Benét* family has just about finished a long poem of unknown nature. . . .

William Morrow & Company will bring out *Isabel Paterson's* new novel, "Never Ask the End," in November. The title is taken from the refrain of a poem by the late *Elinor Wylie*. And it's a very modern novel of very modern people, whereas Mrs. Paterson's other books have been historical romances. But now Mrs. Paterson has a fling at telling us Americans just what sort of creatures we actually are. Very like lemmings, we suspect. . . .

Forty thousand copies have been subscribed in advance of publication of *J. B. Priestley's* new novel, "Faraway." That's in England. Priestley's other novels sold well over one hundred thousand copies in England alone, and this looks like the same kind of thing over again. You'll get the book over here the end of this month from Harper's. . . .

Coward-McCann has coming in August a new novel by *Manuel Komroff,* who made such a hit with "Coronet." The new one is called "A New York Tempest." It will be out on August 17th. Photographs of the principal characters of the book, obtained by the use of professional models and the research department of a costumer's, will be used in advertising and promotion. Komroff has based his story on an actual famous New York murder which *James Gordon Bennett* covered for *The New York Herald* in 1836. . . .

The fact that one of our turtles, *Wynken,* is off again on a tour of the flat—he will probably turn up, however, he has five times before!—turns our mind to this new letter from *George Frisbee* of San Francisco, in which not only turtles but frogs and Shakespeare are discussed:

> Glad you like the turtle tale. I get a big kick studying our pool pets. Forgot the best bit about the turtles. They do not line up unless Cassie wears his white serving jacket. In and out he rambles; but not until he is *en rigueur* do they notice. Someone like Fabre ought to study turtles. He might, on the side, learn the longevity with virility secret. That cut might interest one not an amateur. Yes?
>
> Frogs have their appeal. The boss of the pool in frogdom is a tough little scrapper we raised from a whisker. Through anxious nights we nursed him; and his wink when I approach is full pay. There is much in a frog's wink, when there is understanding. This little tough dictates to a couple of big fellows, who outrate him for bulk as battleship to tug. (Just like assured old college professors of English literature. They had their say and now just blink and hope for more Carnegies or Guggenheims.)
>
> I know the scrapper likes me, for he grins and gives me the high sign wink, but he will not submit to caress.
>
> The large, imposing, colorful frogs love to have their backs scratched. They are too lazy to jump after flies; but greedily gulp flies in any state, so long as they come easy.
>
> Sometimes I feel like chucking the whole Shakespeare study I have worked in for years, and try to follow Fabre's idea and study actual life.
>
> Shakespeare minds are chips from images frozen or embalmed years ago. God's lower orders play their game true to form. God's higher group, the professors of English literature, cheat, distort, ignore facts; and for what? To save a false image erected in Stratford-upon-Avon; which they know is false; but which they insist upon cramming down the throats of the world. Why? They are too lazy, and too well-fed, and too satisfied to bother about the truth. Just like our big frogs. They give me a big laugh. . . .

Through the kindness of *Christopher Morley,* we print the following poem by *Sheila M. Thomson,* æt. sixteen:

A MATTER OF OPINION

I never did care
For sentimental things
The way poets describe
Their lady's eyes
Saying that they
Are summer skies.
Saying that they
Have midnight hair
Even if they have
What do I care!!

We are glad also to print the following poem by Mrs. Edwina Stanton Babcock:

LUNESQUE

The dark bluff looms along the rising seas;
The moorland glimmers
In blurry curves of silver, and the bland
Unmargined terraces of shelving sand
Plane to the symmetries
And forthright ease
Of naked swimmers.
The cool spare torsos flash
On ivory sweep of arm. The argent limbs
And hardy quarters
Canter moon-latitudes; the bright parts thrash
Through ambulant waters.
The curling waves, high buoyantly riding,
Cozen white breast and supple negligent thigh;
They laugh, child-like, bestriding
In ecstasy the billowy-crested combs,
Spray sandalled, opening blinding doors of domes;
Triumphant sliding
Illumined sides from freshening mount to mount
The dunes make little count
Or any hiding;
The long dim-distanced beach maintains a muted mien,
Etched with the dark detailing of the scene,
The silver-bowering waves,
Who to no prurience pander,
Immerse all difference
In lucid candor.

Among Harper books for the Fall we see listed "No Poems; or, How to Forget French in Ten Easy Lessons." When we find a title like that, we immediately suspect that old recluse of Forty-fourth Street, *Robert C. Benchley.* And, sure enough, the author—'tis he! We don't know just exactly when this profound tome will burst upon an astonished world, but when it does it will lighten the depression. . . .

And so into the shower-bath again!

THE PHŒNICIAN.

The Reader's Guide

(*Continued from preceding page*)

weigh the question: should I go through it at the speed made necessary by the rush of getting ready to sail, or should I greedily save it to read on the voyage? Let someone else tell the readers of this department about "The Fountain," as fortunately some of our best critics have done; I have made sure by that taste what is ahead of me, and I'm going to give it the wide horizon it deserves, being a work of contemplation.

I shall await with peculiar pleasure the August books, for Ellen Glasgow's "The Sheltered Life" (Doubleday, Doran) comes then, and anything she may write may turn out to be her best book; J. B. Priestley's "Faraway" (Harper) comes then, too, and A. S. M. Hutchinson breaks the silence of several seasons and gives "This Freedom" a successor in "Big Business" (Little, Brown). Three long stories of Willa Cather come out then in one book: "Obscure Destinies" (Knopf), and Mazo de la Roche's "The Lark Ascending" (Little, Brown).

The fall opens, so far as I am concerned, with Barrie's "Farewell Miss Julie Logan" (Scribner); at last we are to have in book form the inimitable ghost story, in some respects as fine a tale as Barrie ever told, which the *Times* gave its Christmas Eve readers last year as a supplement of the daily edition, the only fiction ever printed in its pages. Thomas Wolfe's new novel, "K-19" (Scribner), will be out by then, and I'll be waiting for it as one who bends over the ticker; they say the title is the name of a Pullman; the ones I've frequented have had more melodious ones, like Ogallala or Jane Austen. Hugh Walpole's "The Fortress" (Doubleday, Doran) comes in September, and the novel by Ann Bridge that won the Atlantic ten-thousand-dollar prize, "Peking Picnic" (Little, Brown).

Christopher Morley's "Human Being" (Doubleday, Doran) is promised for October. By that time I suppose Ernest Hemingway's "Death in the Afternoon" (Scribner) will be out, but that is not a novel; it is a bull-fighting book. "The Georgia House," by Frank Swinnerton, and Etsu Sugimoto's "A Daughter of the Narikin," are both Doubleday, Doran books for October; sometime in the early fall comes a love story by Galsworthy, "Flowering Wilderness" (Scribner).

I have read a good many books in my day, but I never break the seal of a nice fresh package from a publisher without something the same sort of thrill one has when at the theatre the curtain begins ever so gently to rise. But I look for more than that when these novels come out of the packages.

M. *N., Atlanta, Ga., asks about a large atlas for family use; if there are large-scale separate maps of individual counties in England and provinces in France, etc., and if large maps of foreign cities, such as London, Paris, or Rome, may be bought in this country.* Beginning in the middle of the question, there are foreign atlases that may be bought in this country which contain individual maps of the counties of England or provinces of France; one could be obtained for any country at some twenty-five dollars or more a volume. Practically the same purpose, however, will be served by the "New World Loose Leaf Atlas" (Hammond) which has the remarkable feature of keeping up with anything wars or reconstruction can do to the world. It is bound in a special loose-leaf binder, from which sheets may be withdrawn as they become obsolete—it makes one giddy to think how often that happens lately—and new maps replaced by a "correction sheet service." There are physical, economic, and political maps of all creation and an index with "practically every place of any size whatever."

For special uses—such as walking tours—there are, of course, the topographical maps one can get from any map shop, often from stationers and bookshops; you can get them all from the Geological Survey at Washington, and at Hammond's map shop on Church Street, N. Y., you can get them for anywhere in the United States. Rather more than half the country is thus covered by topographical maps, and some states may be found practically complete. I have used them for New England, where it was delightful to find every farmhouse and crossroad put down. In England one gets the Ordnance Survey maps, one for any district where you may be can be bought at any stationer's; they put down not only metalled roadways and lanes in more or less regular use, but Roman roads, now only cart tracks, taking one straight to nowhere in particular, and pre-historic tracks you can trace only by a different color in the grass or as you look down from the crest of a hill; they put down mounds and rings and archæological remains, and the farms have names like Windwhistle or Crawlboys, and there are villages called Nether Wallop or Winterbourne Dauntsey—I am reading this off Sheet 33, now on my wall but once taking me from Winchester to Stonehenge in the skylark month. No doubt one can get these aids to the pedestrian in France, but not so easily as motor road maps; anyway, we had to do without any in La Perche. As this led to cross-country experiments such as falling into ditches and landing in moated farmyards, it was really an advantage; a country scarcely seems foreign after you have fallen into one of its ditches.

Large scale maps of every important European city, folding to pocket size, may be bought at good map stores here. Hammond's catalogue lists them under each country. There are excellent city maps in Baedekers and Blue Guides, with finding-systems that have called down many a tourist's blessing.

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